

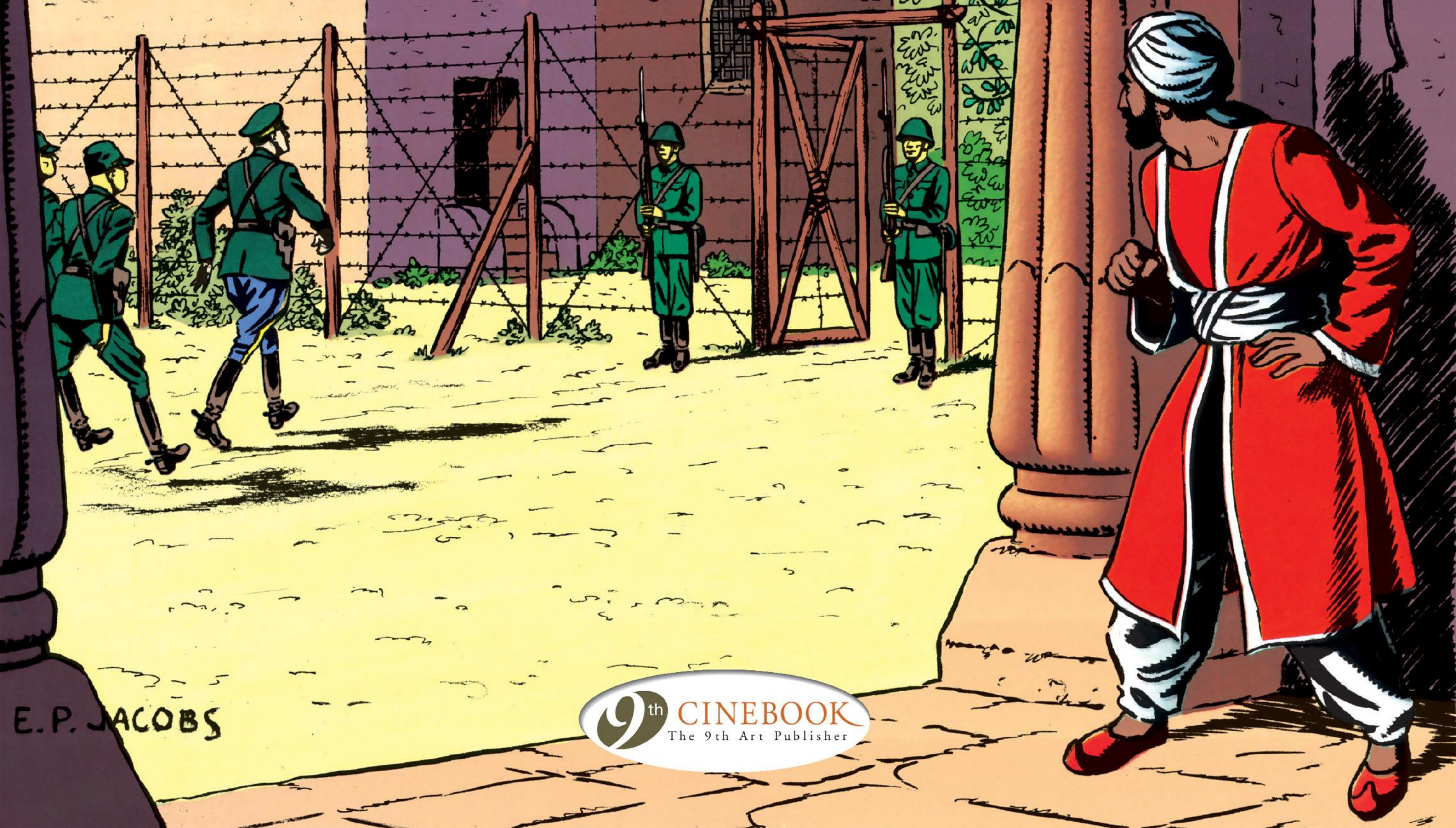


THE ADVENTURES OF BLAKE & MORTIMER

By EDGAR P. JACOBS

Part 2

THE SECRET OF THE SWORDFISH



E. P. JACOBS

9th CINEBOOK
The 9th Art Publisher

E. P. JACOBS

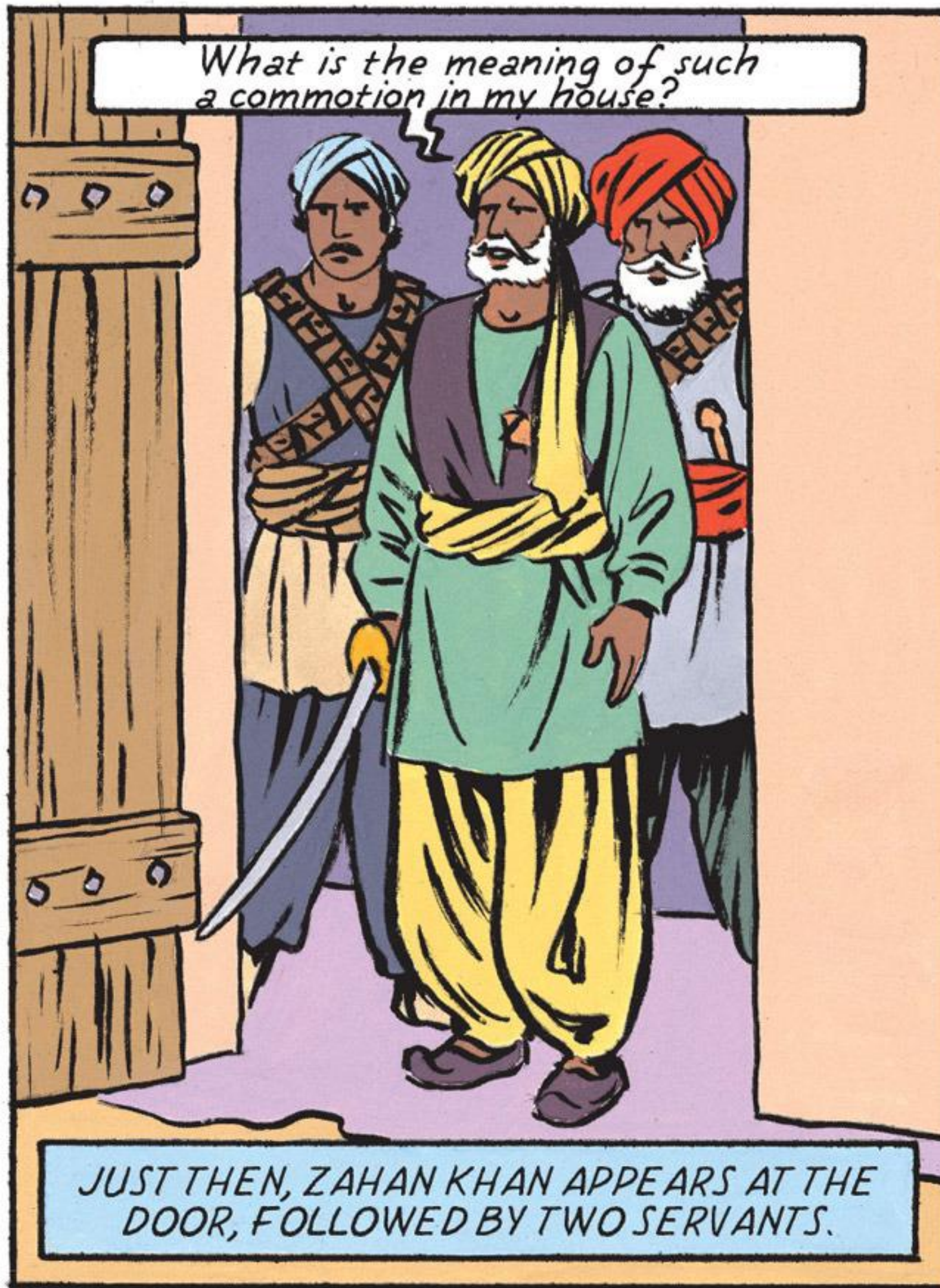
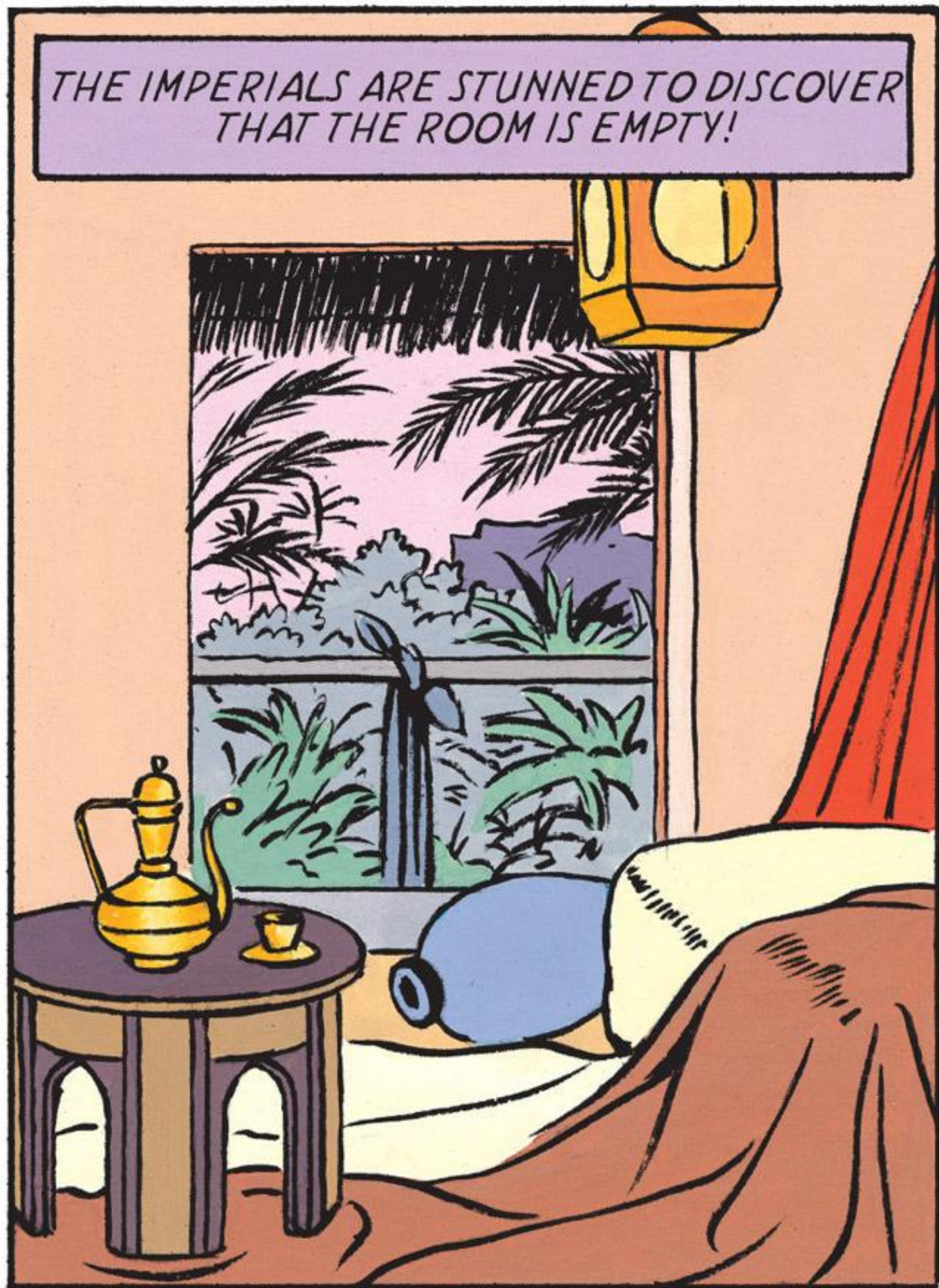
THE SECRET OF THE SWORDFISH

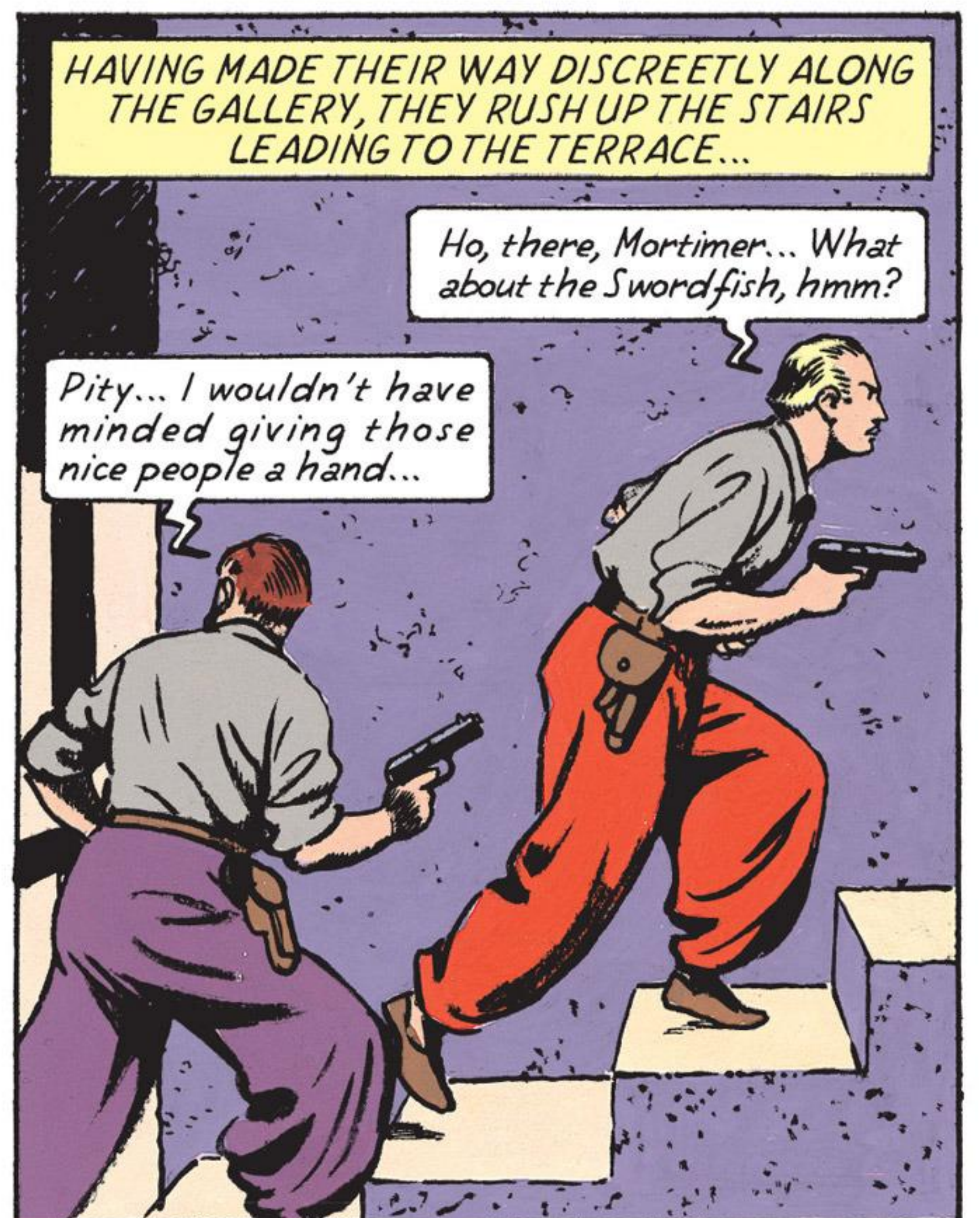
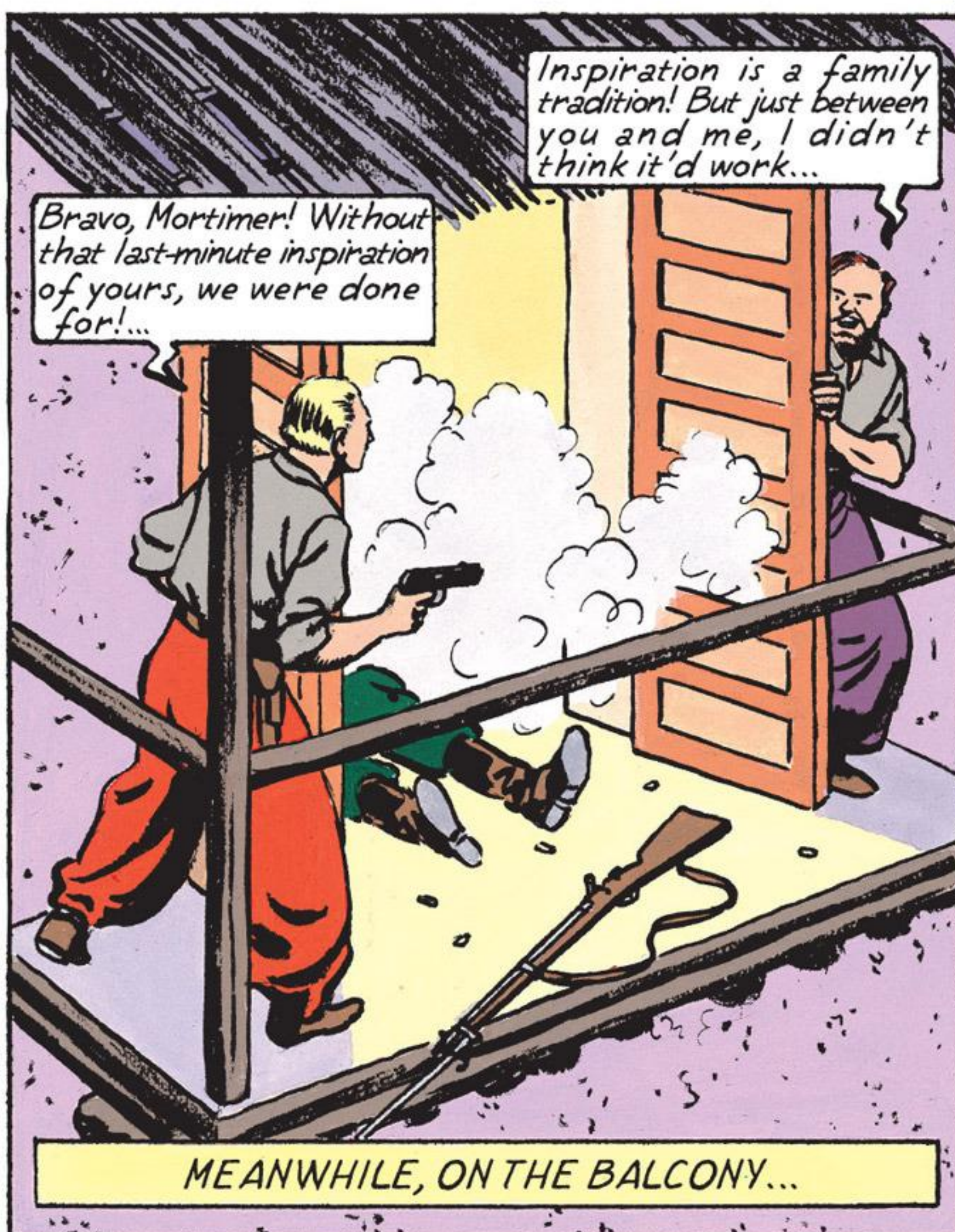
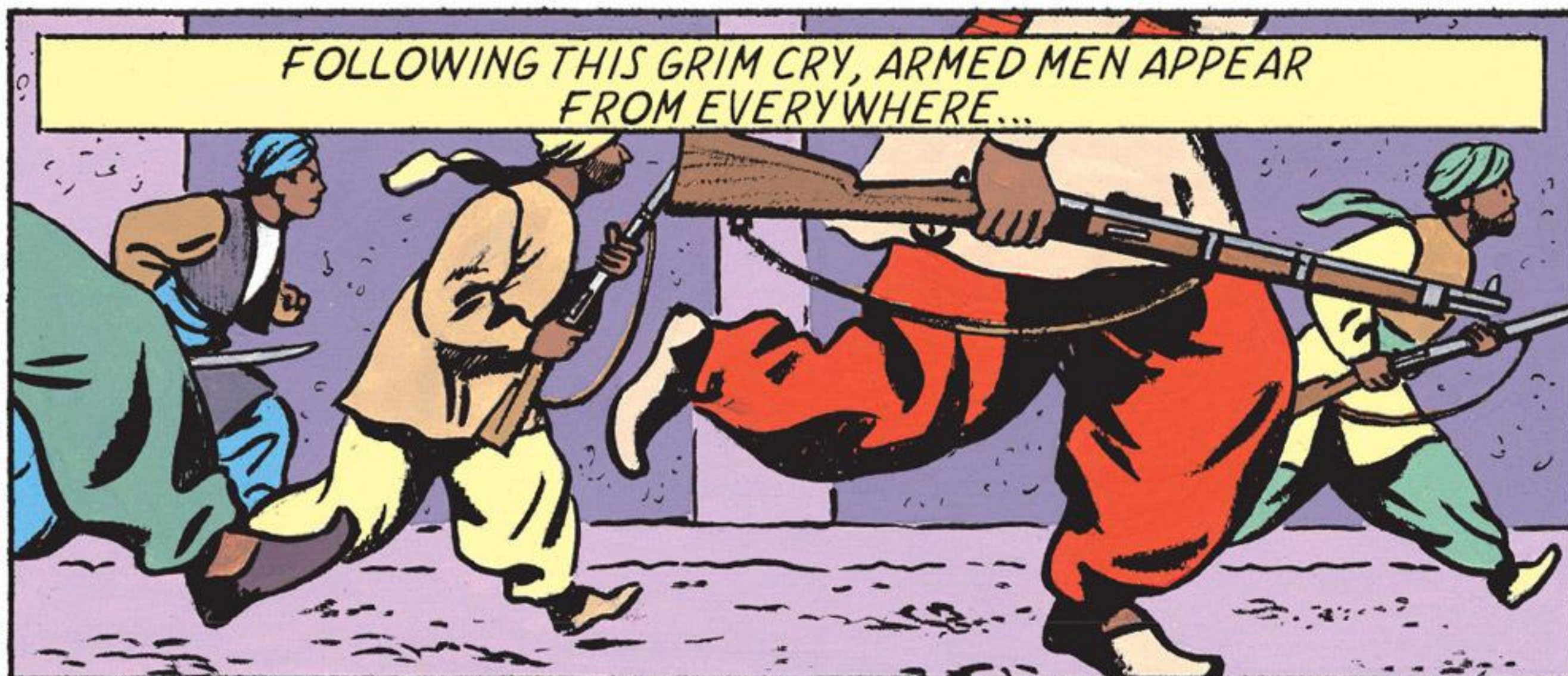
PART 2

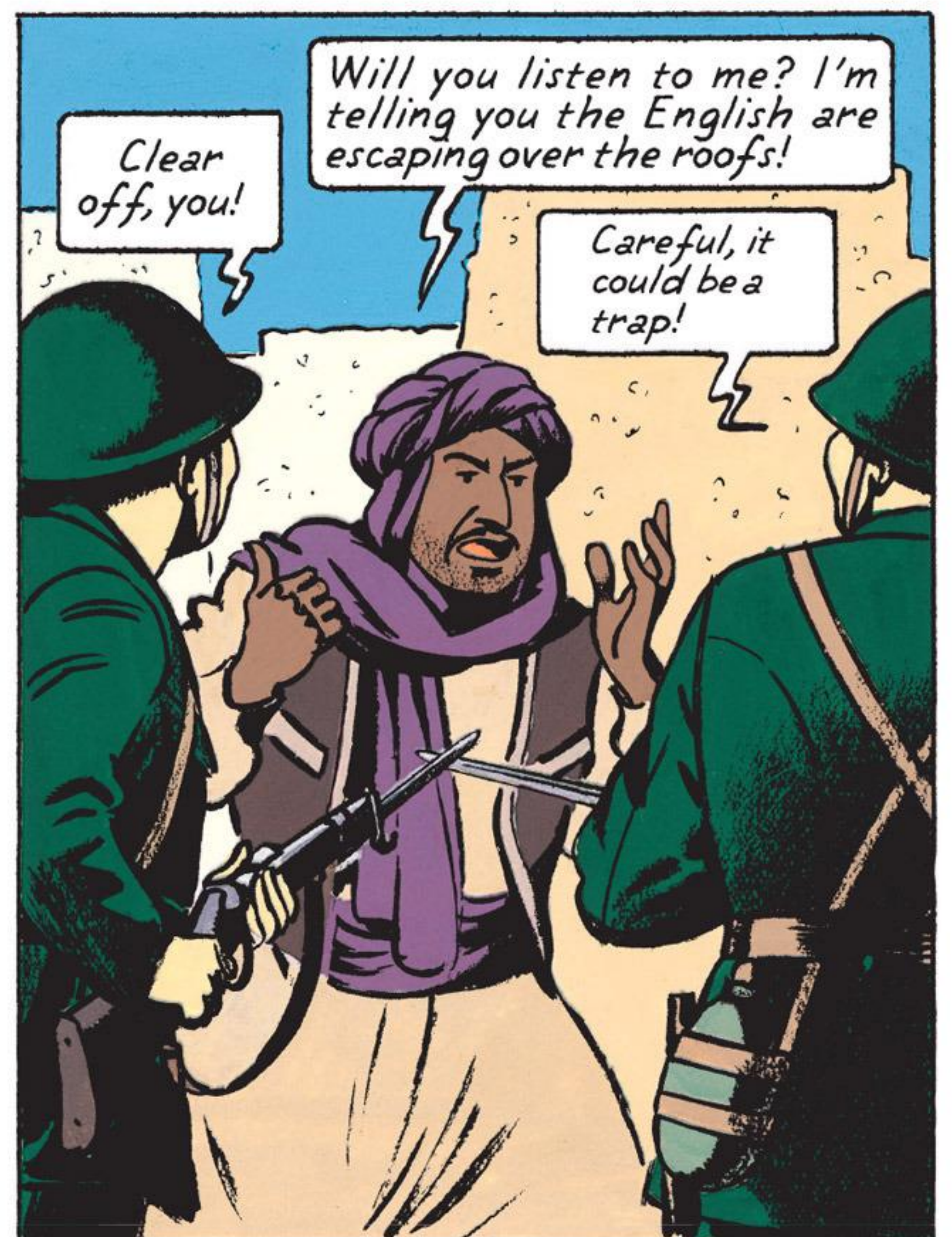
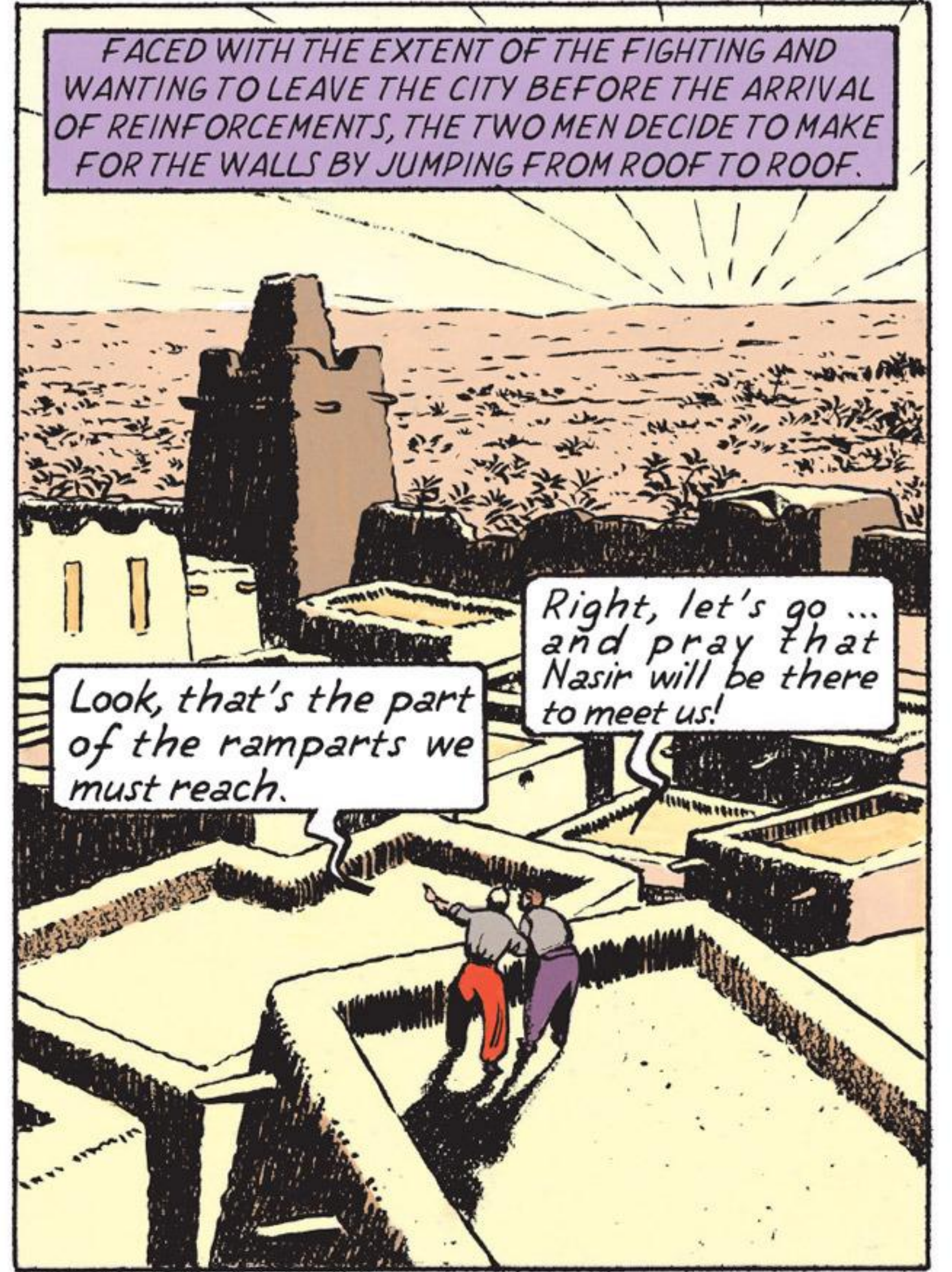
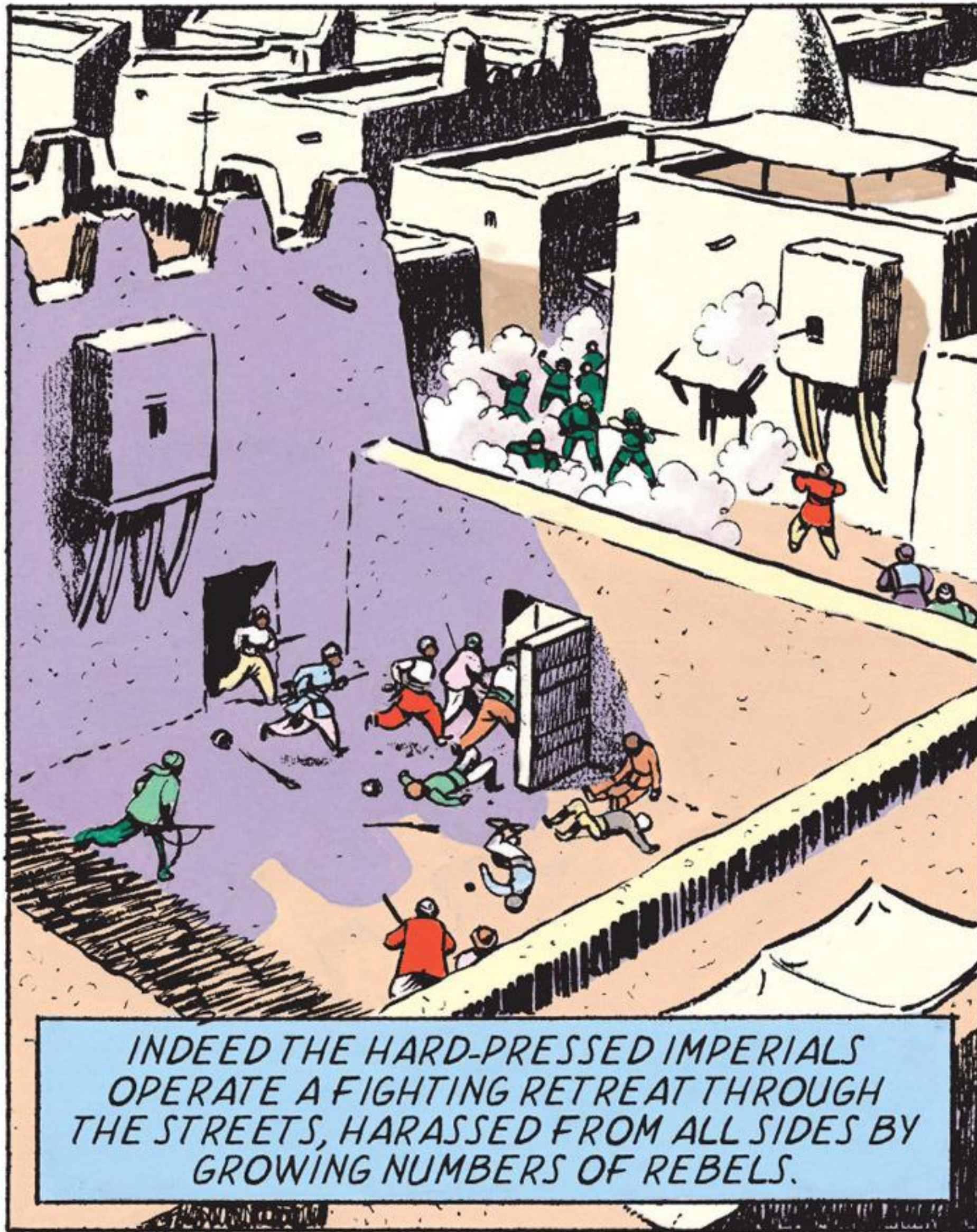
MORTIMER'S ESCAPE

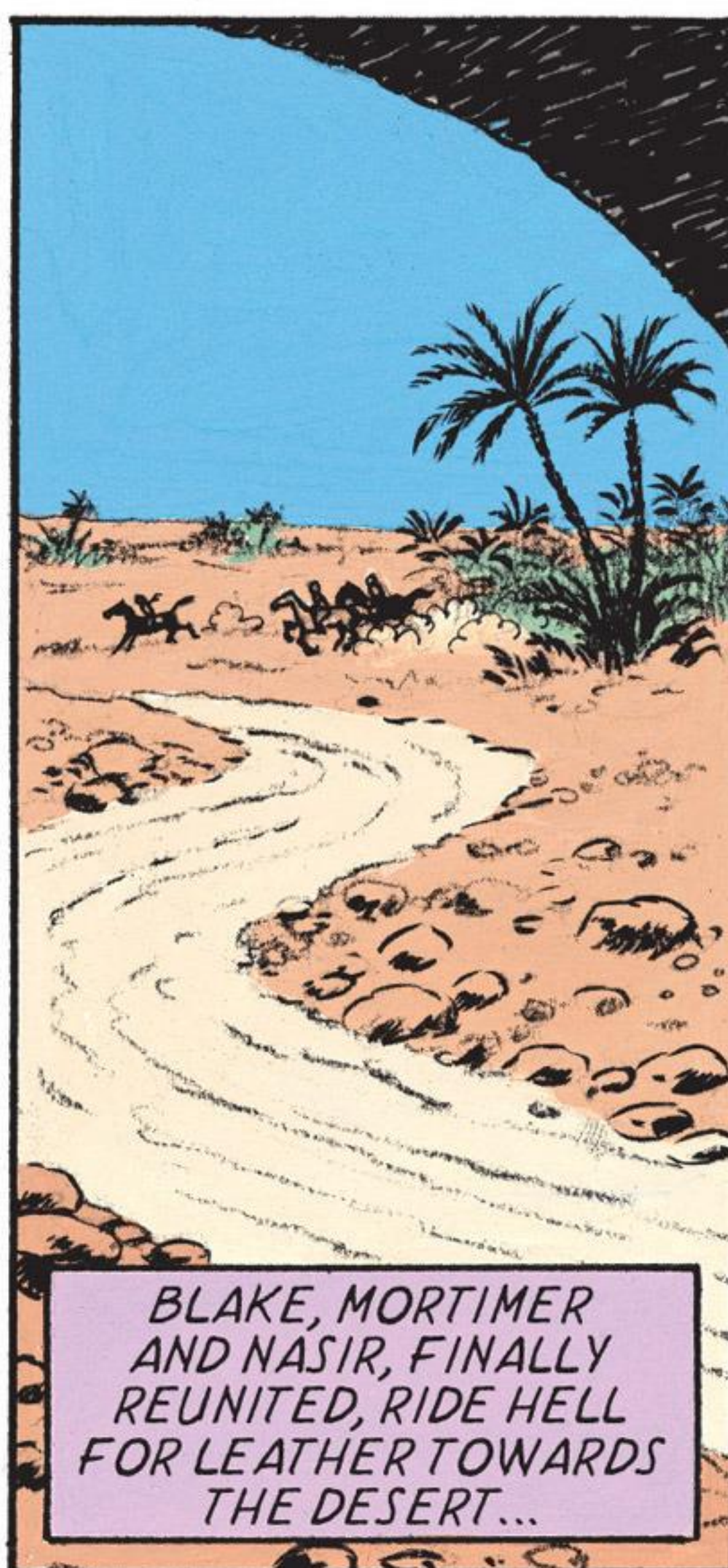
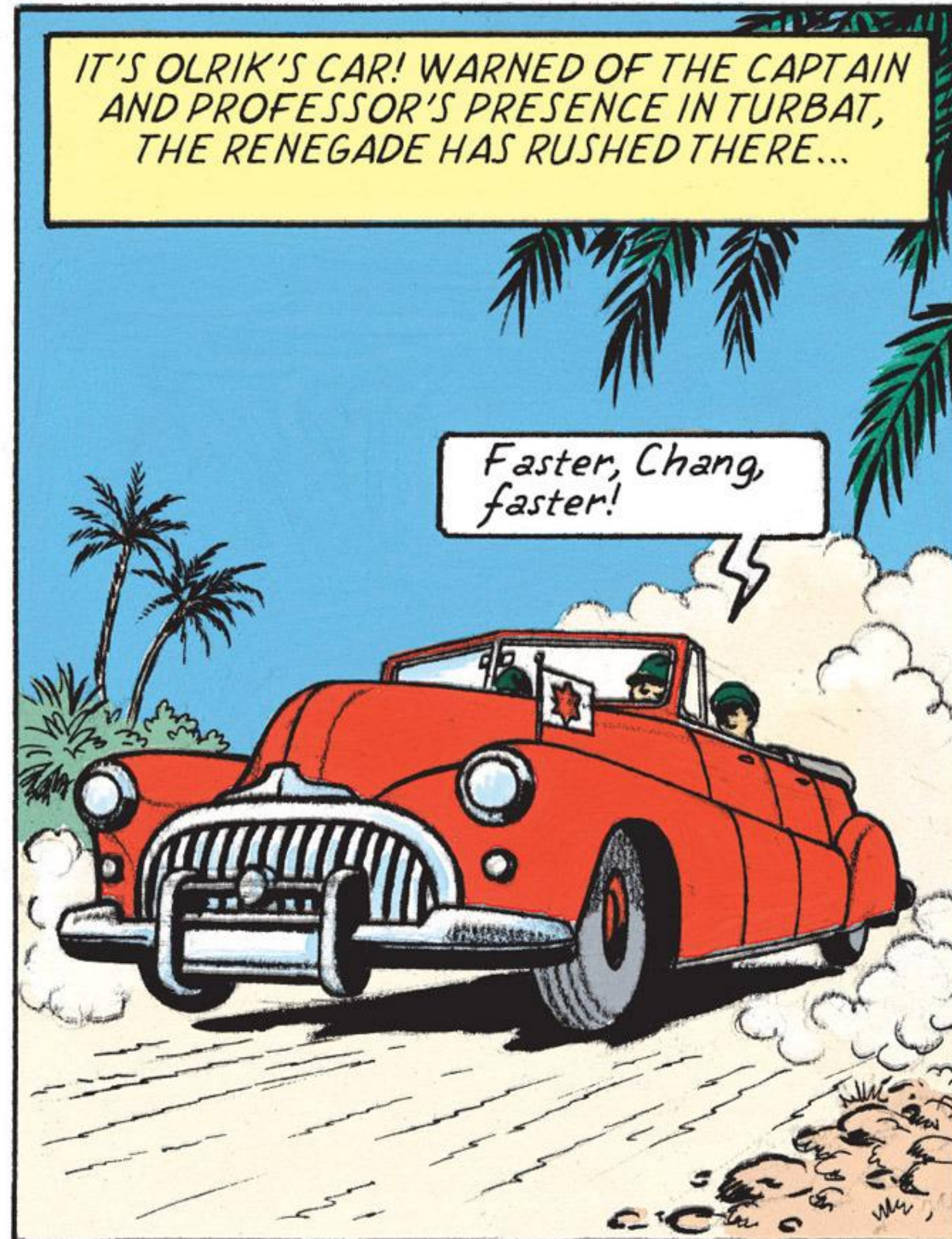
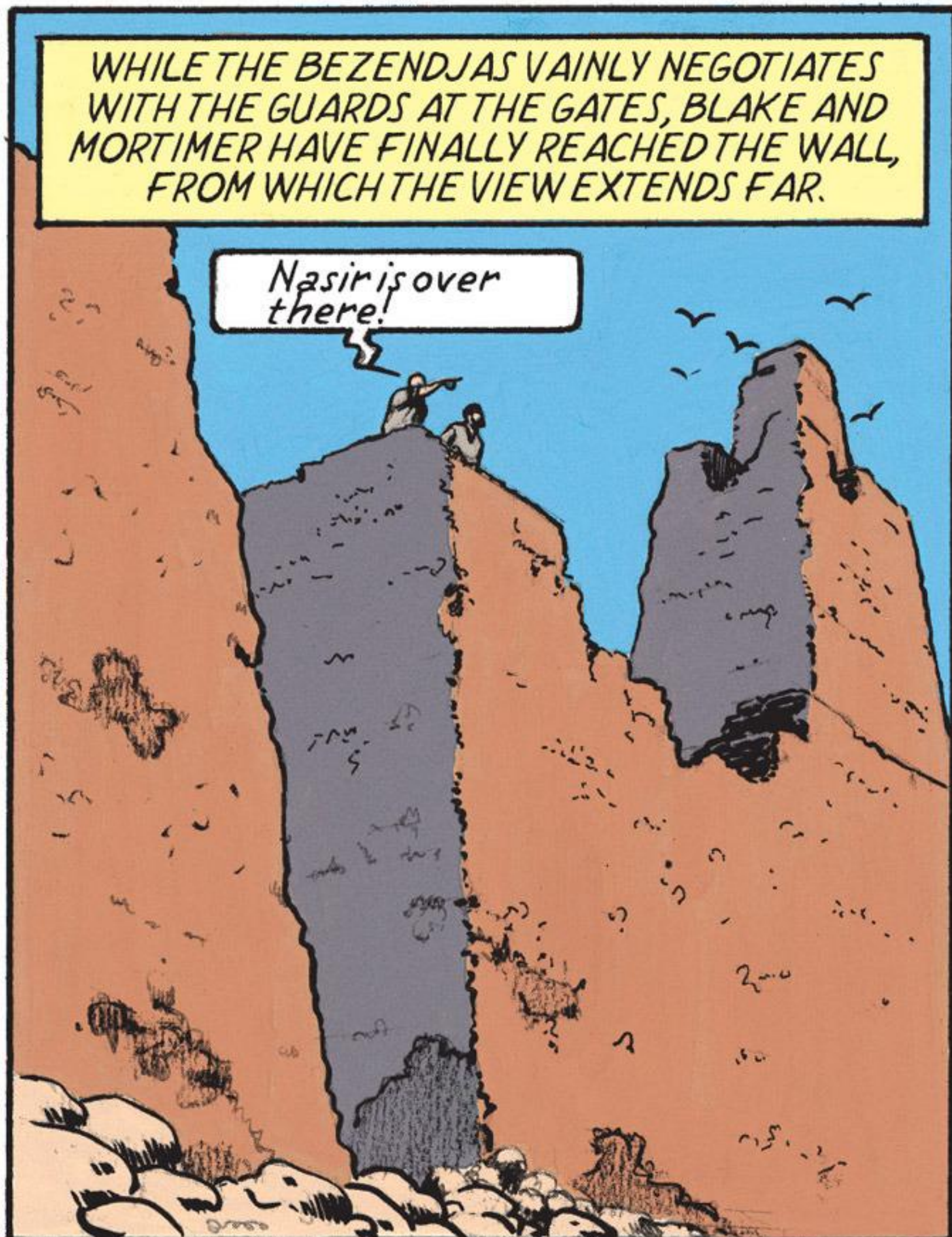
Colour work: Philippe Biermé, Luce Daniels

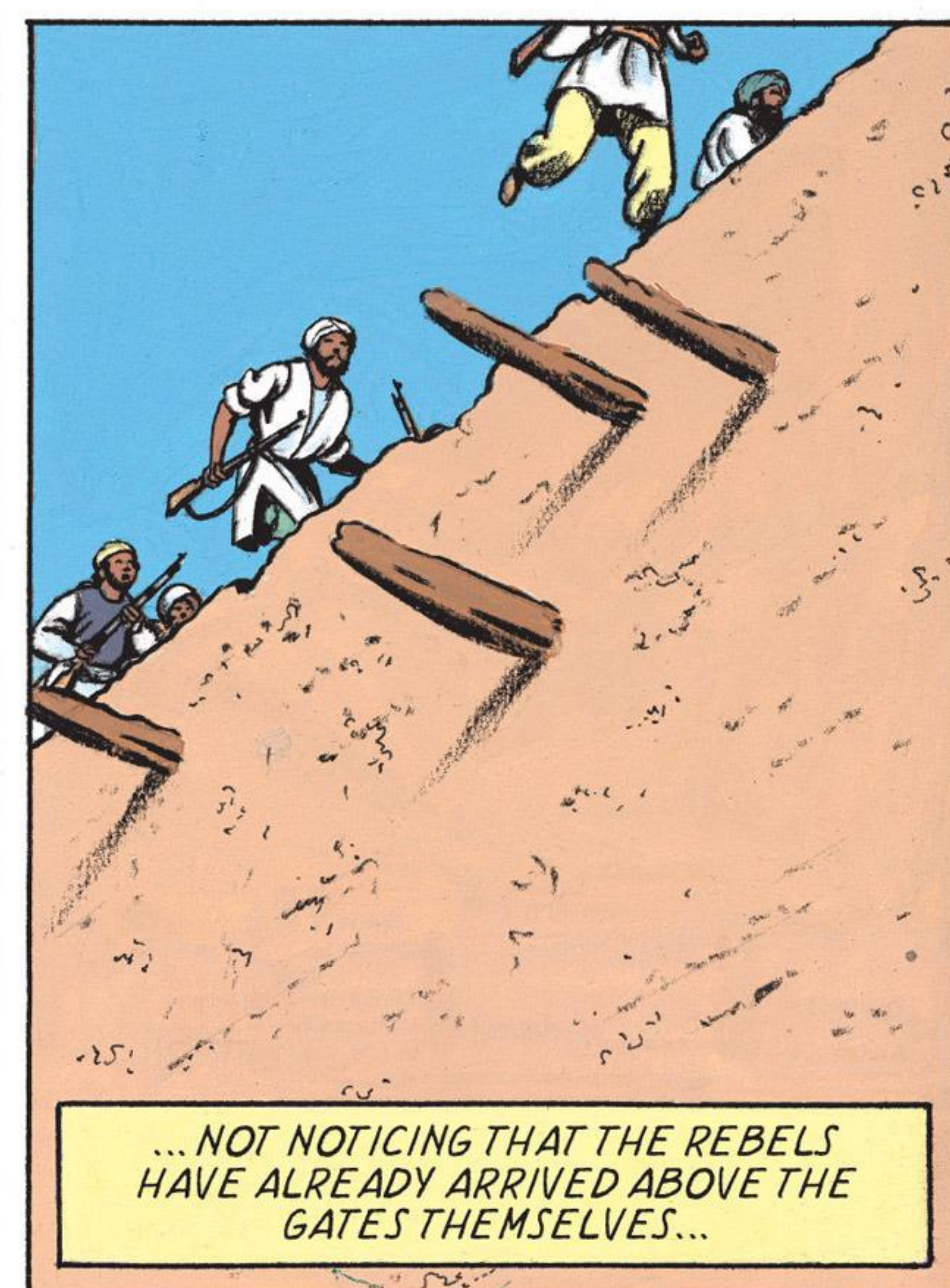
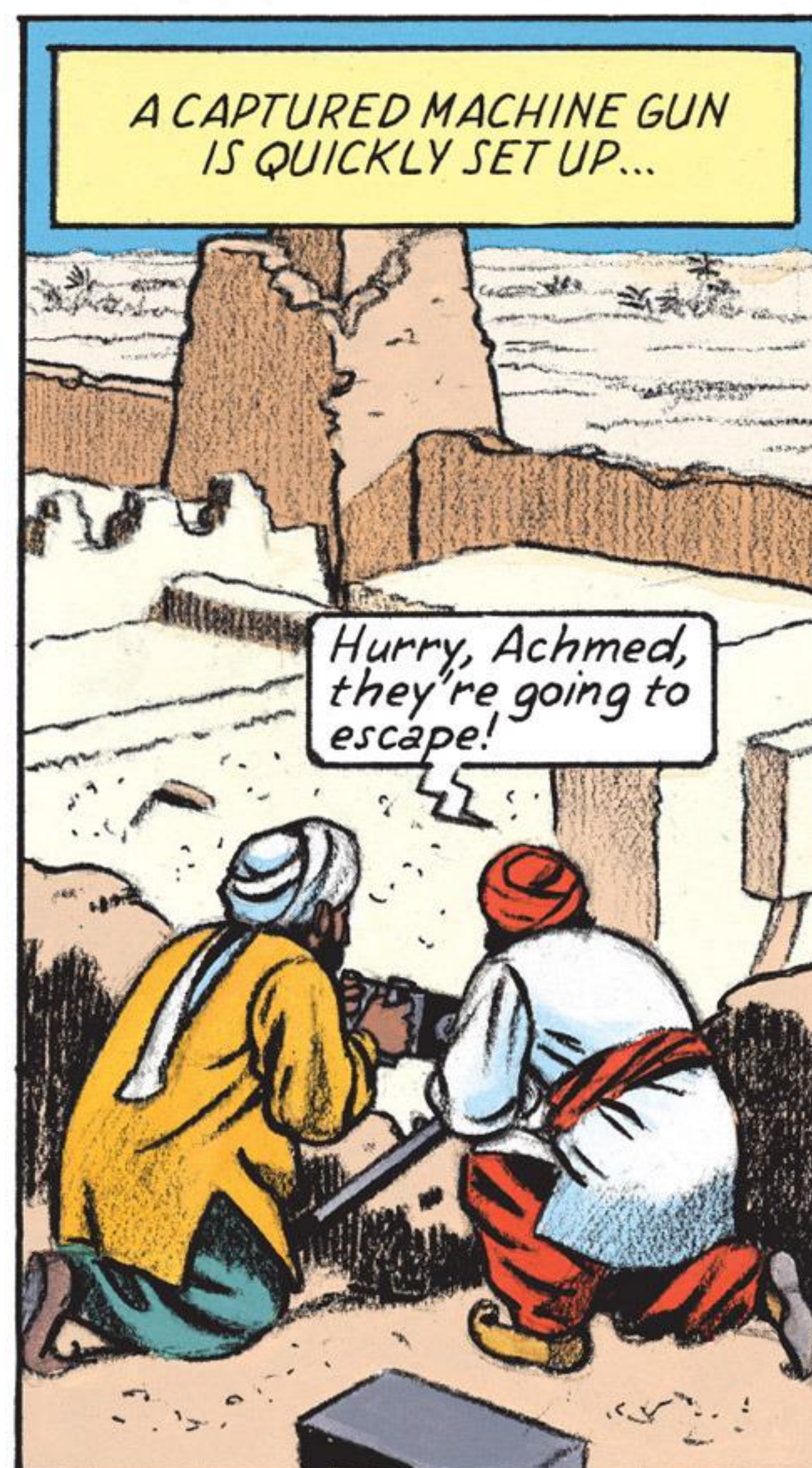
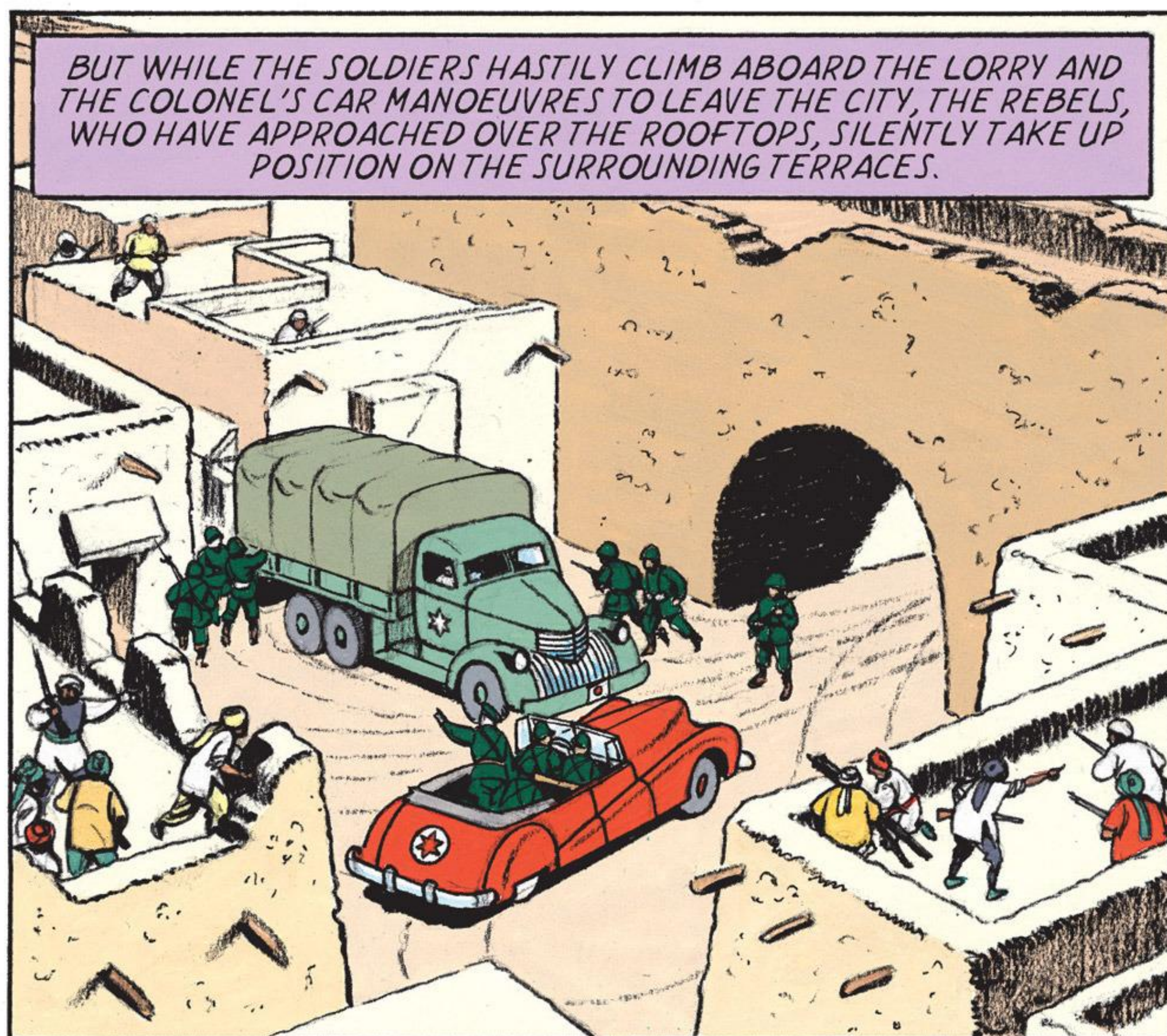






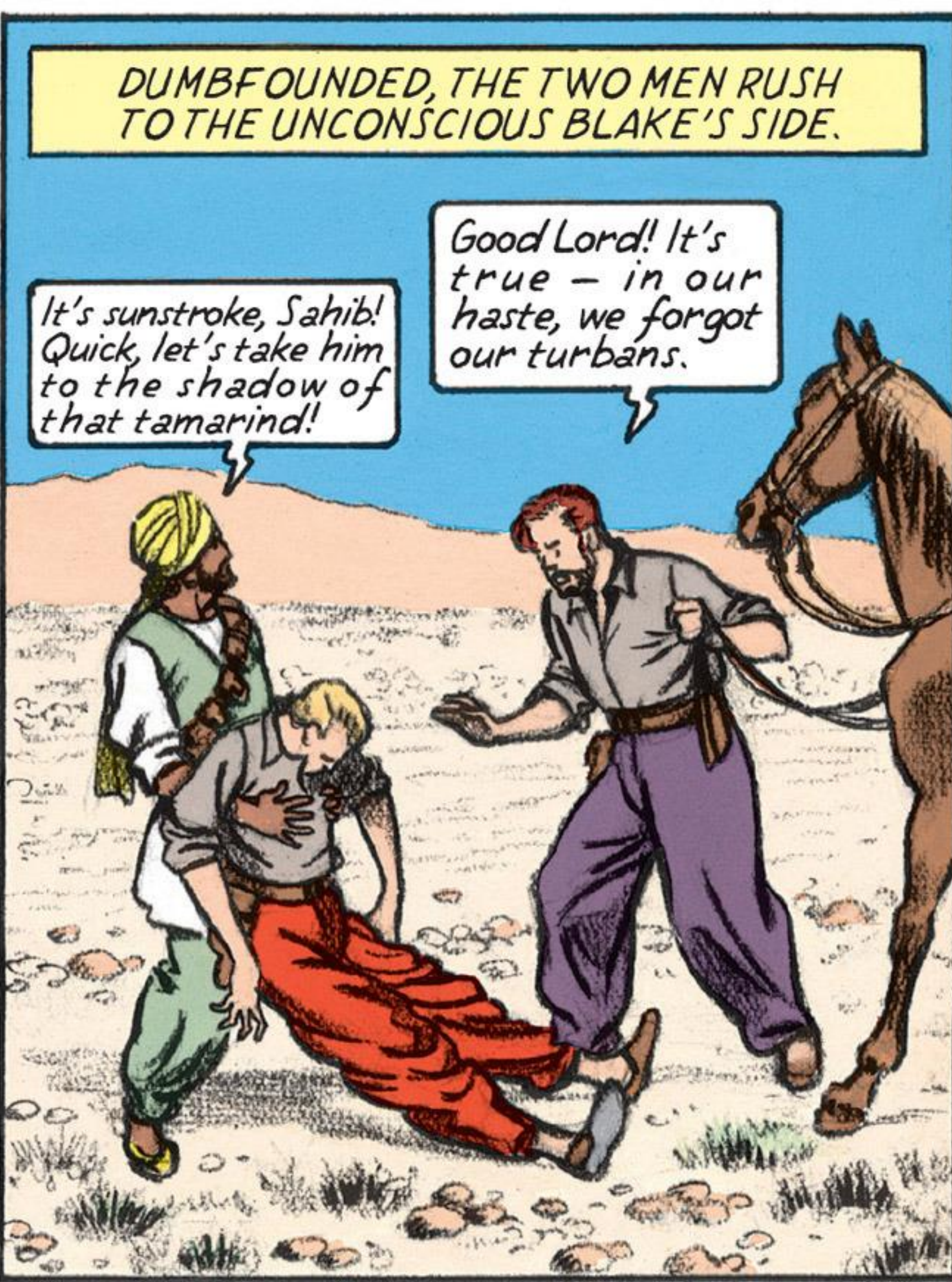
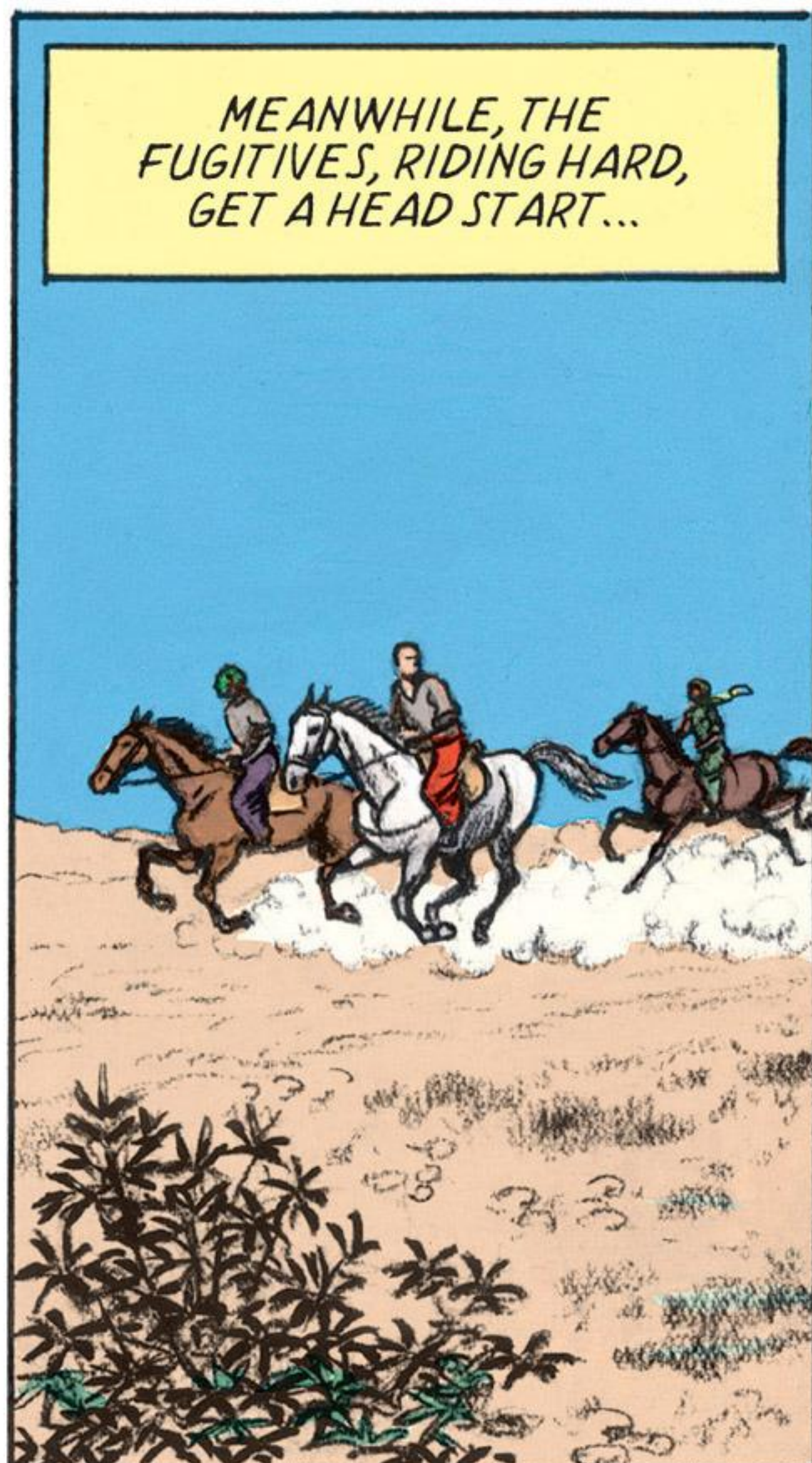
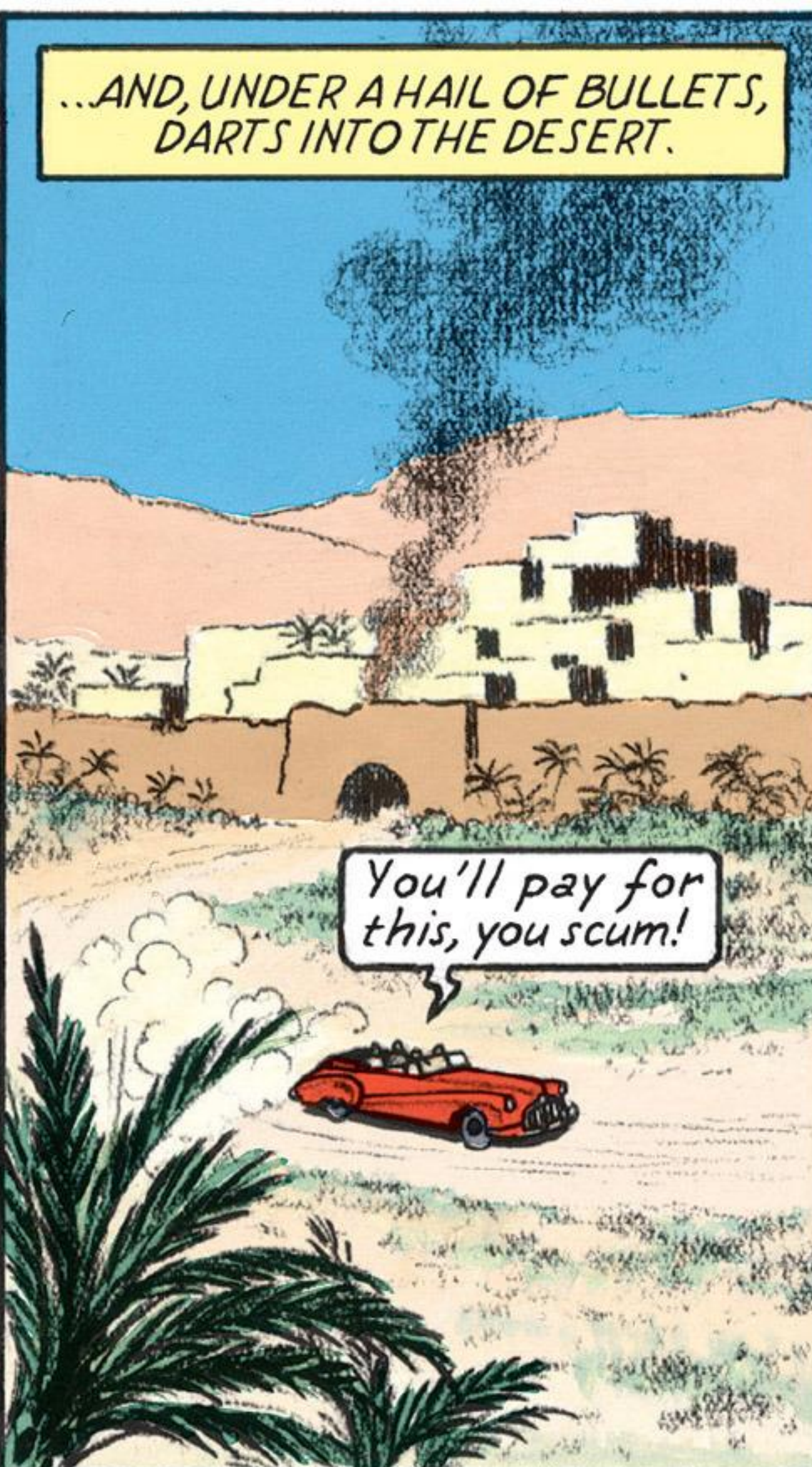
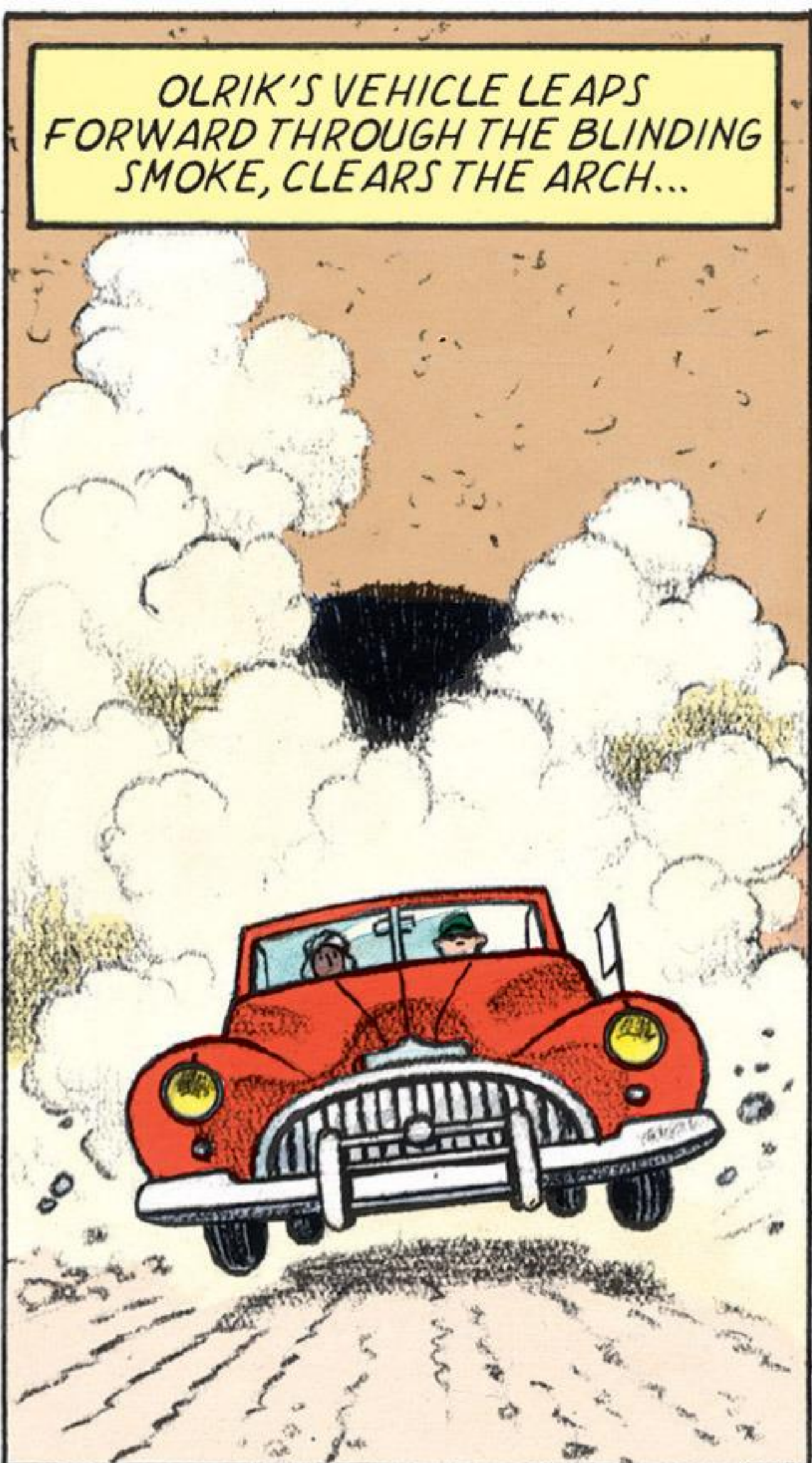
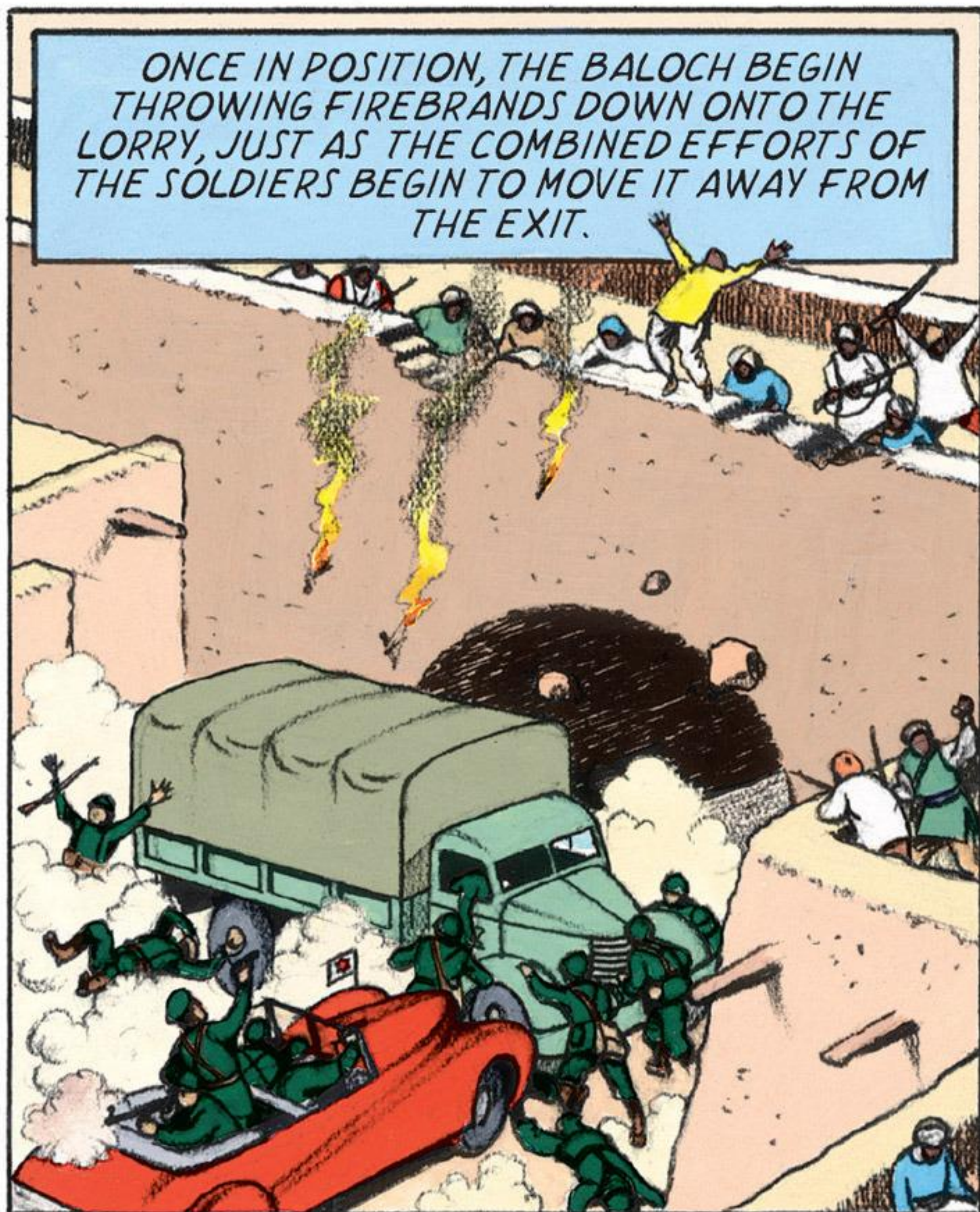


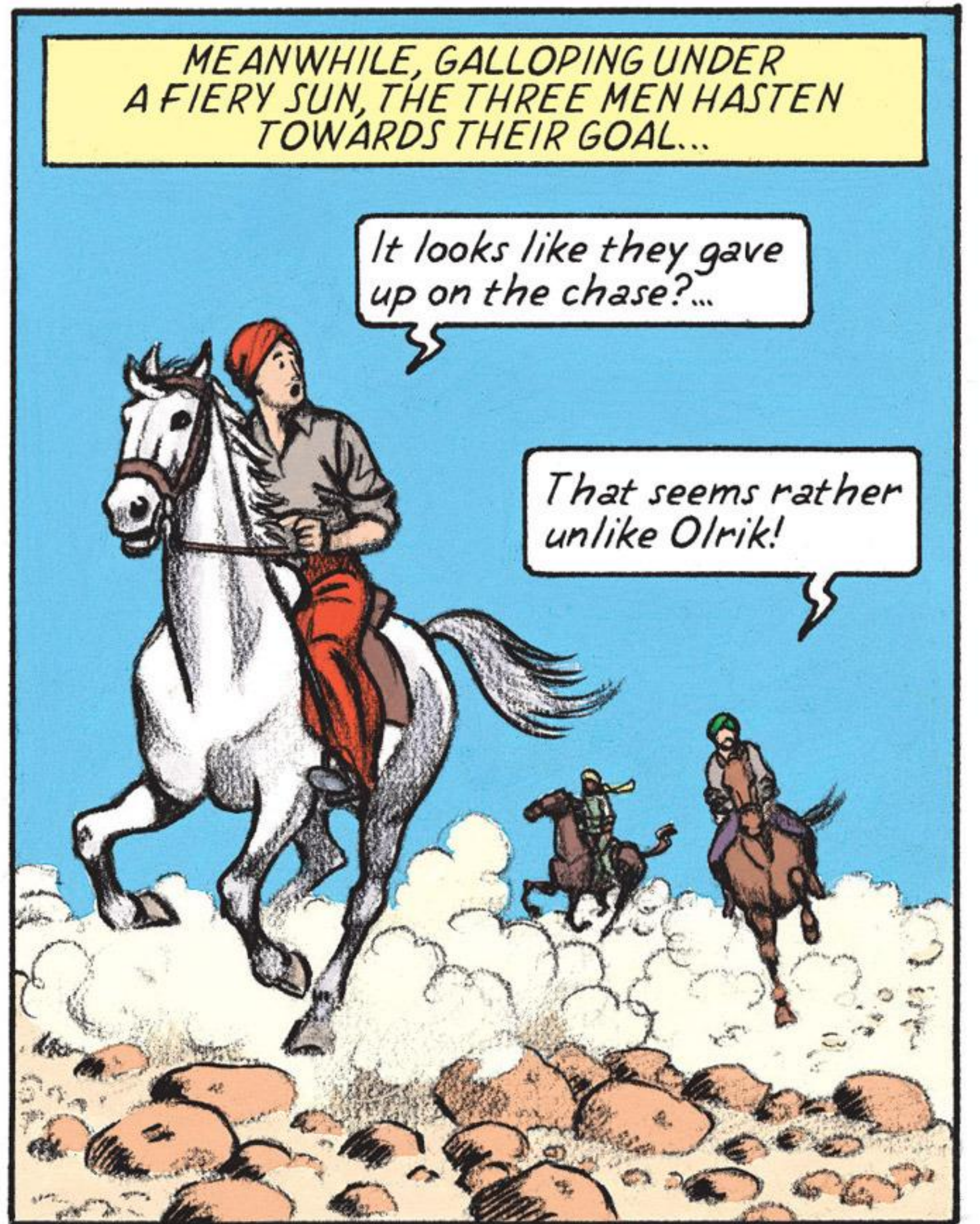
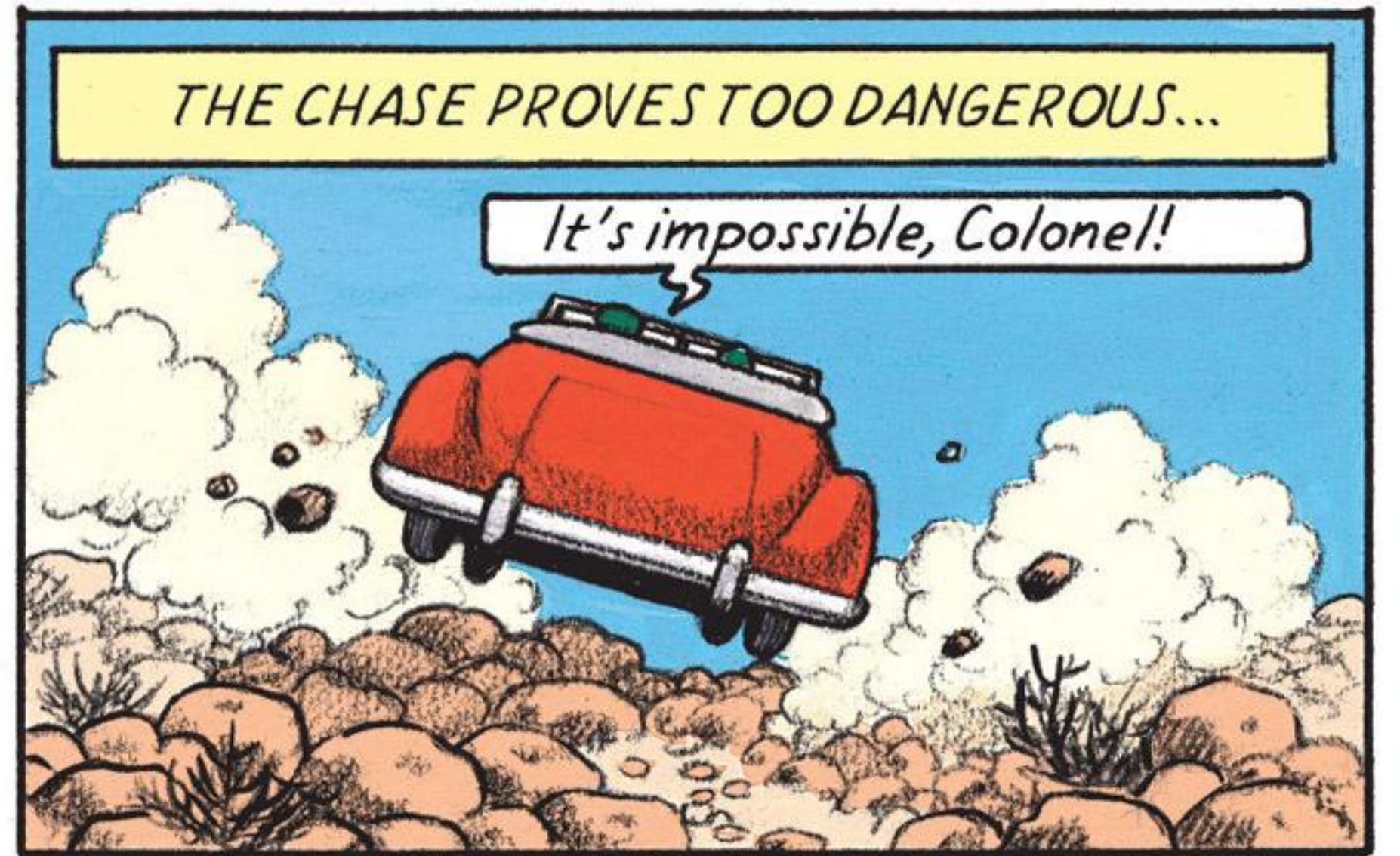
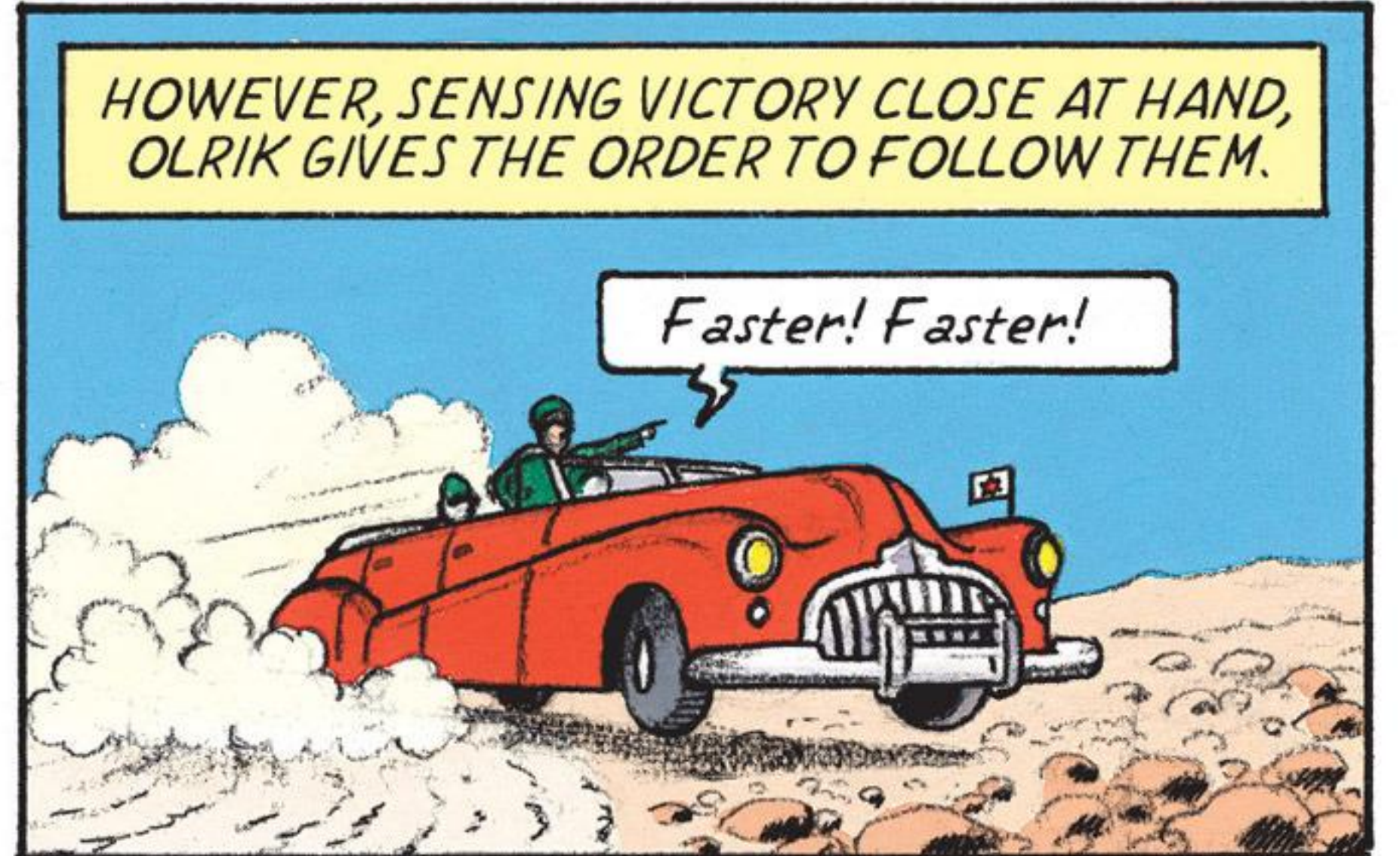
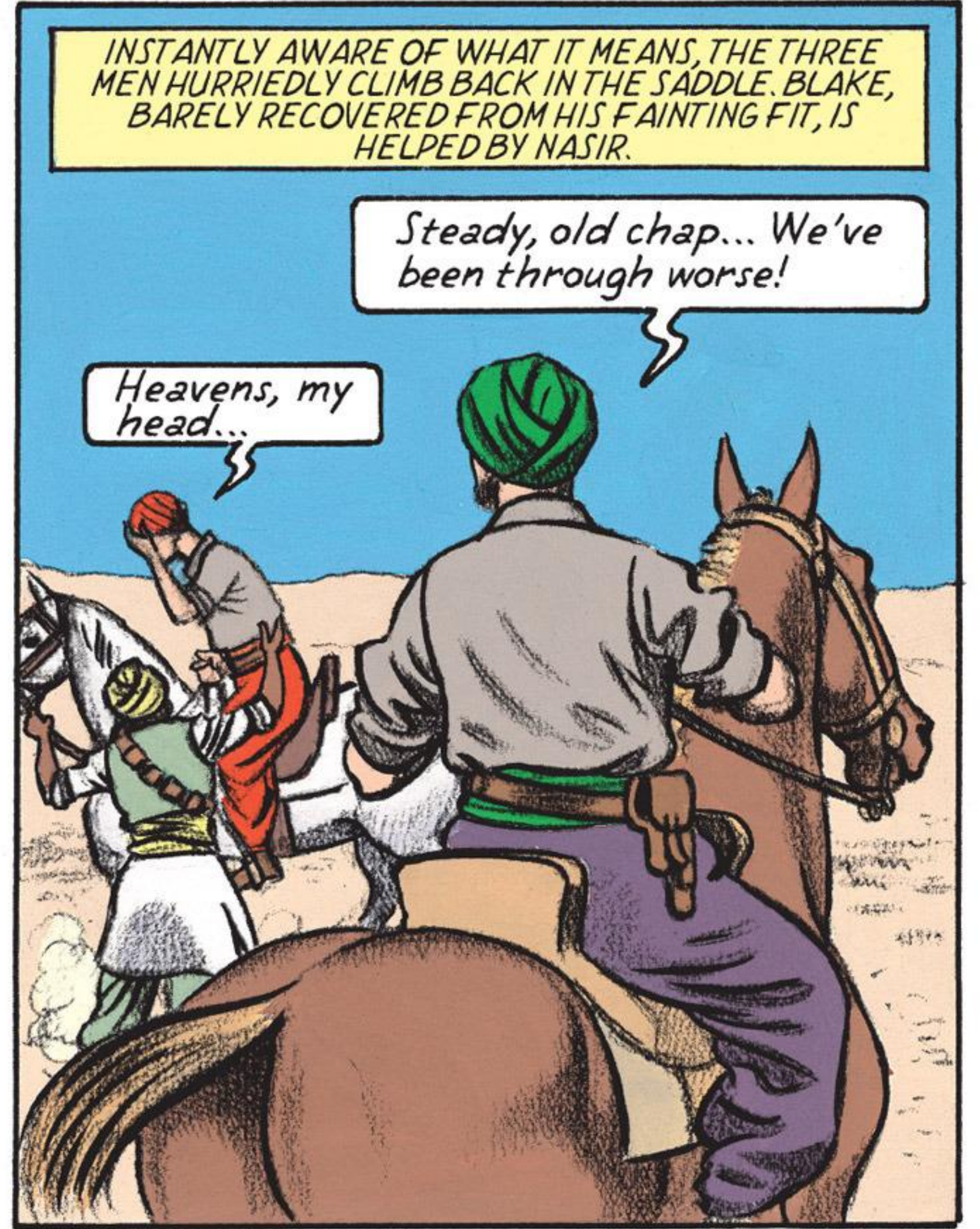
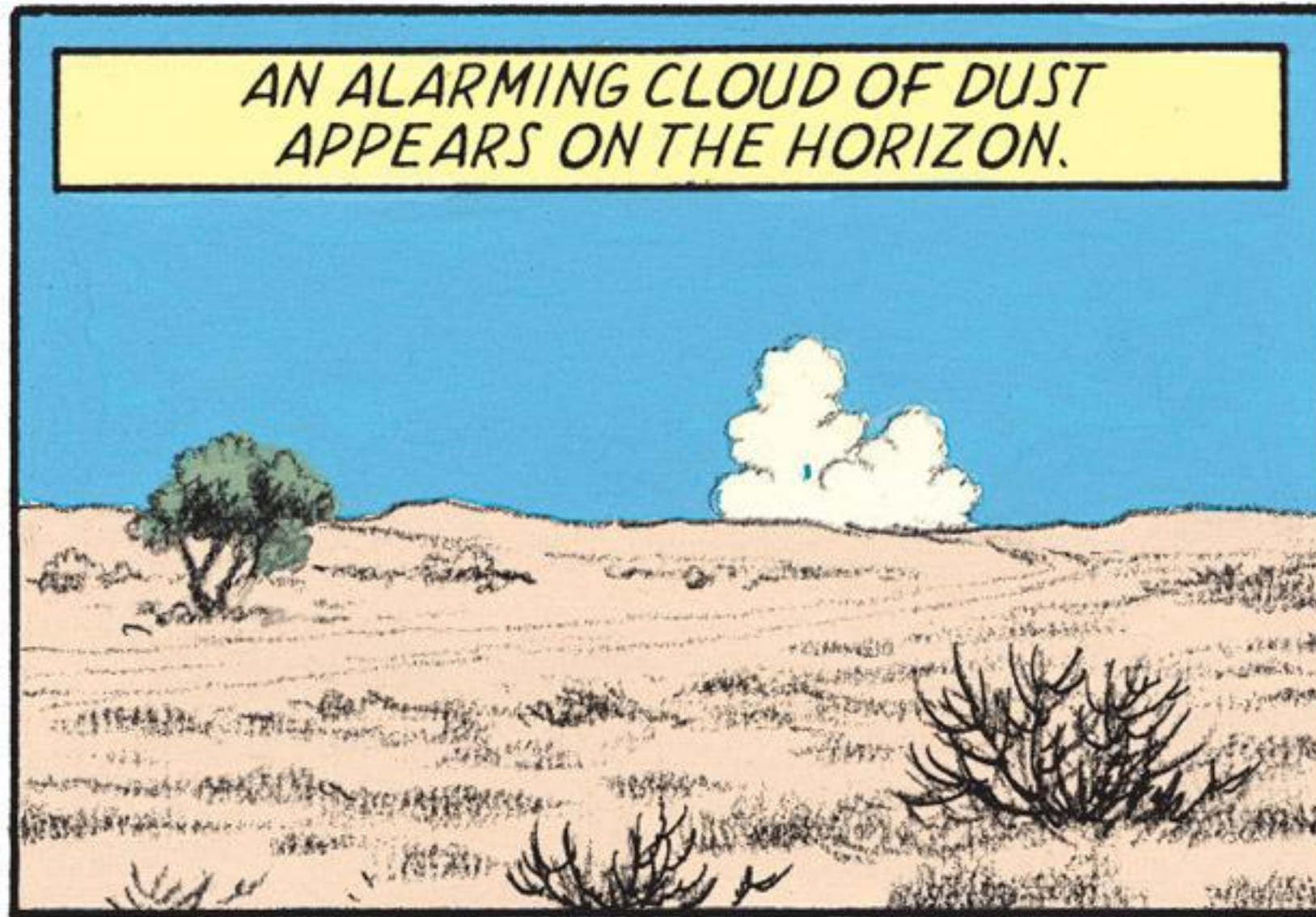
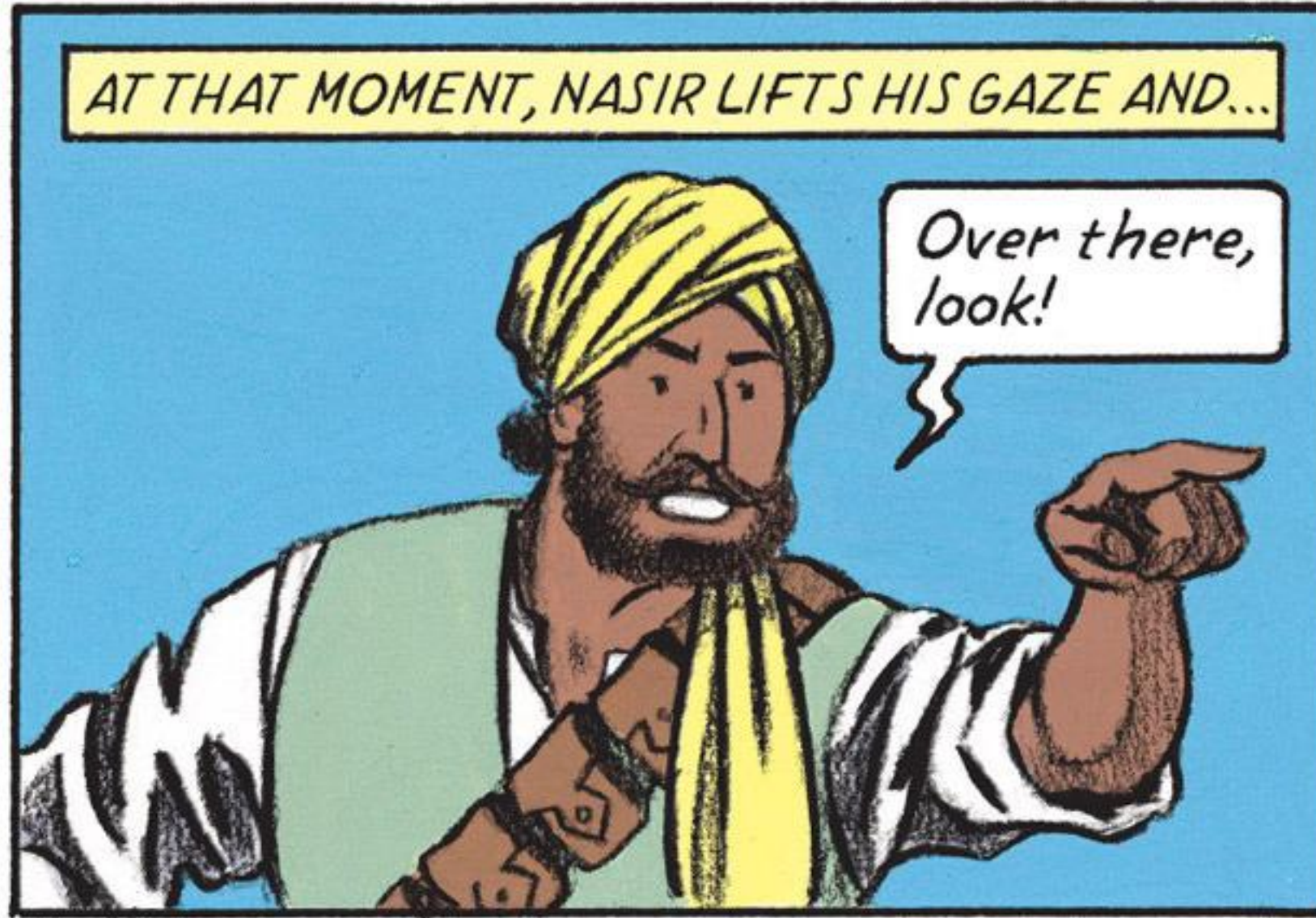
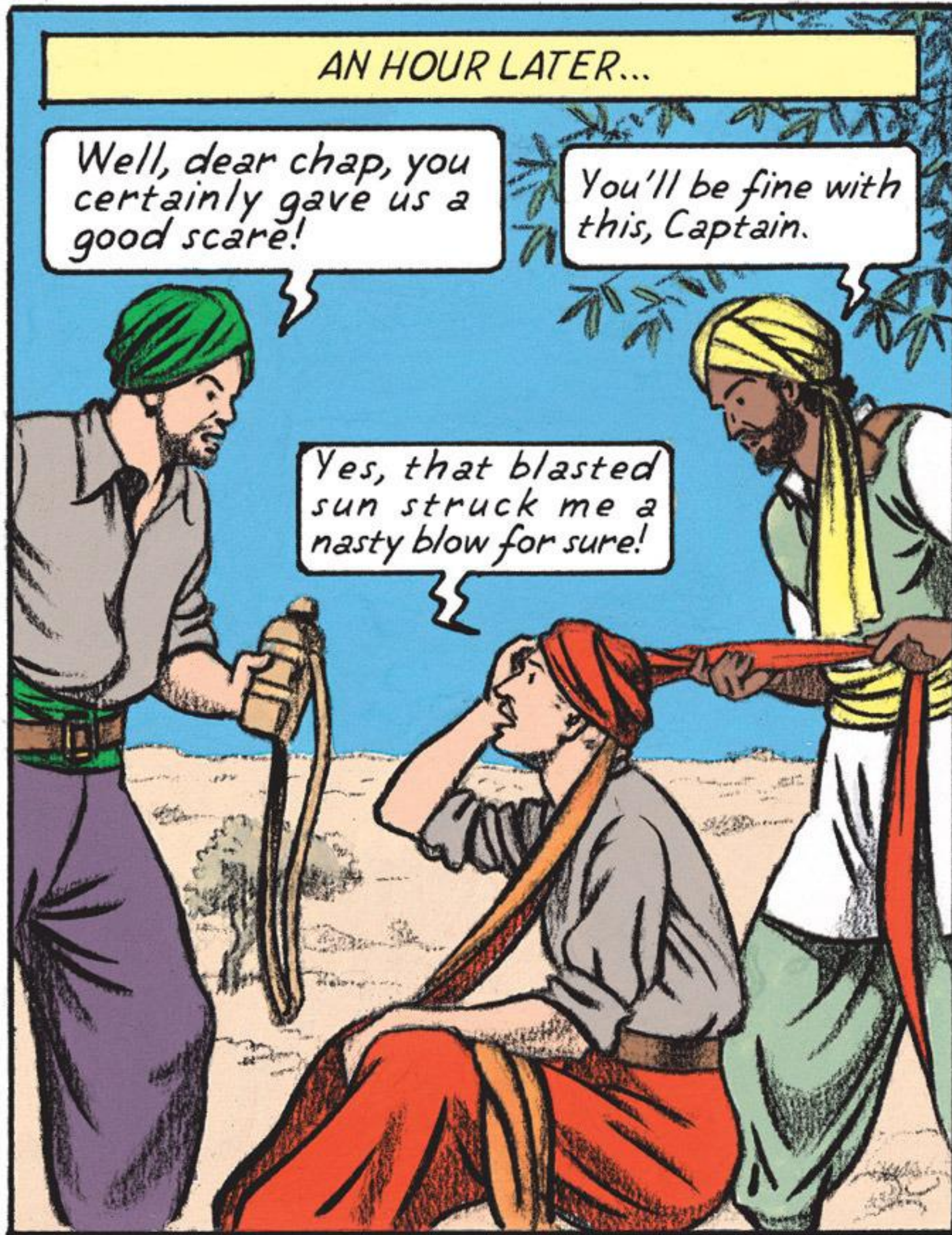


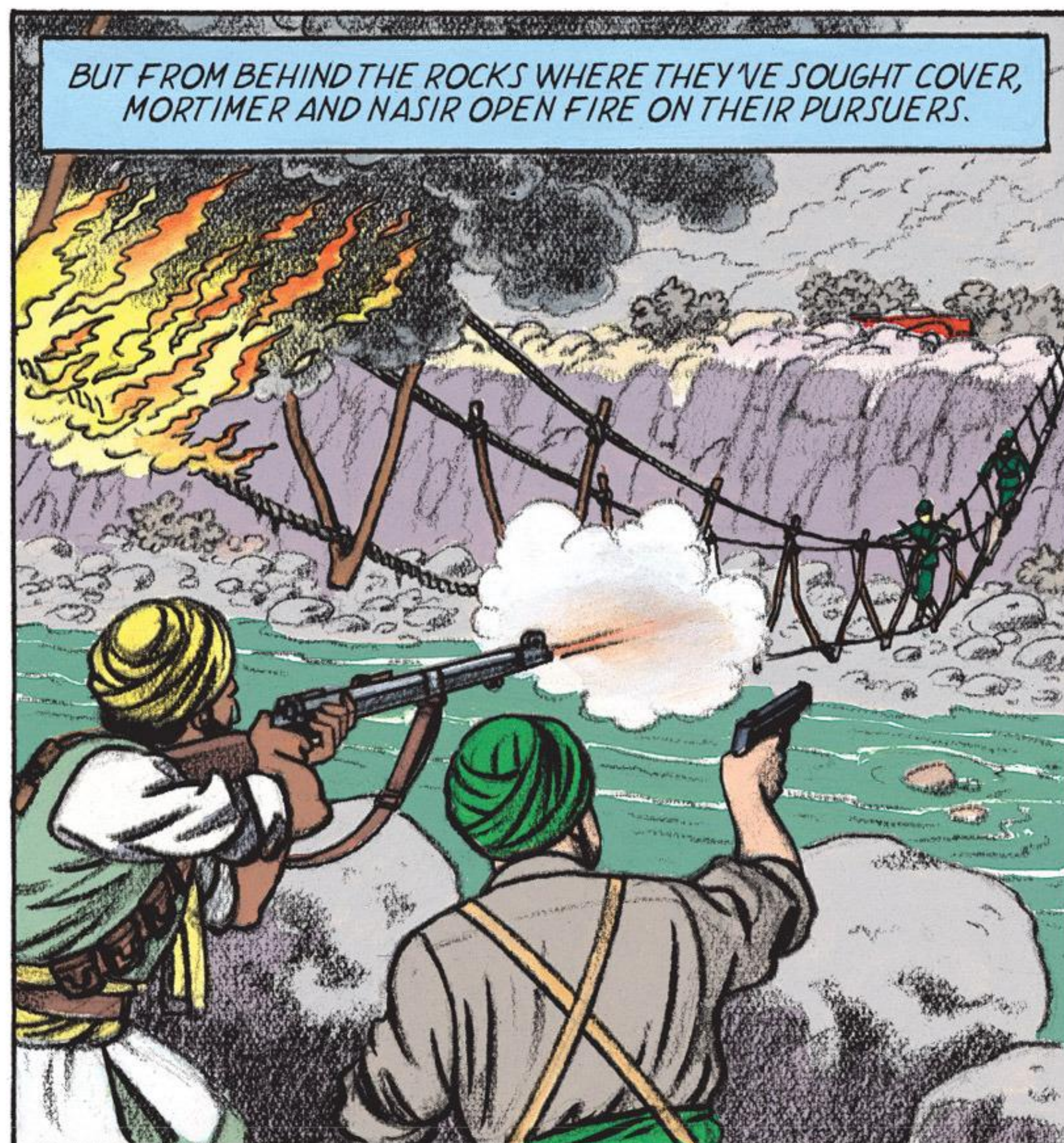
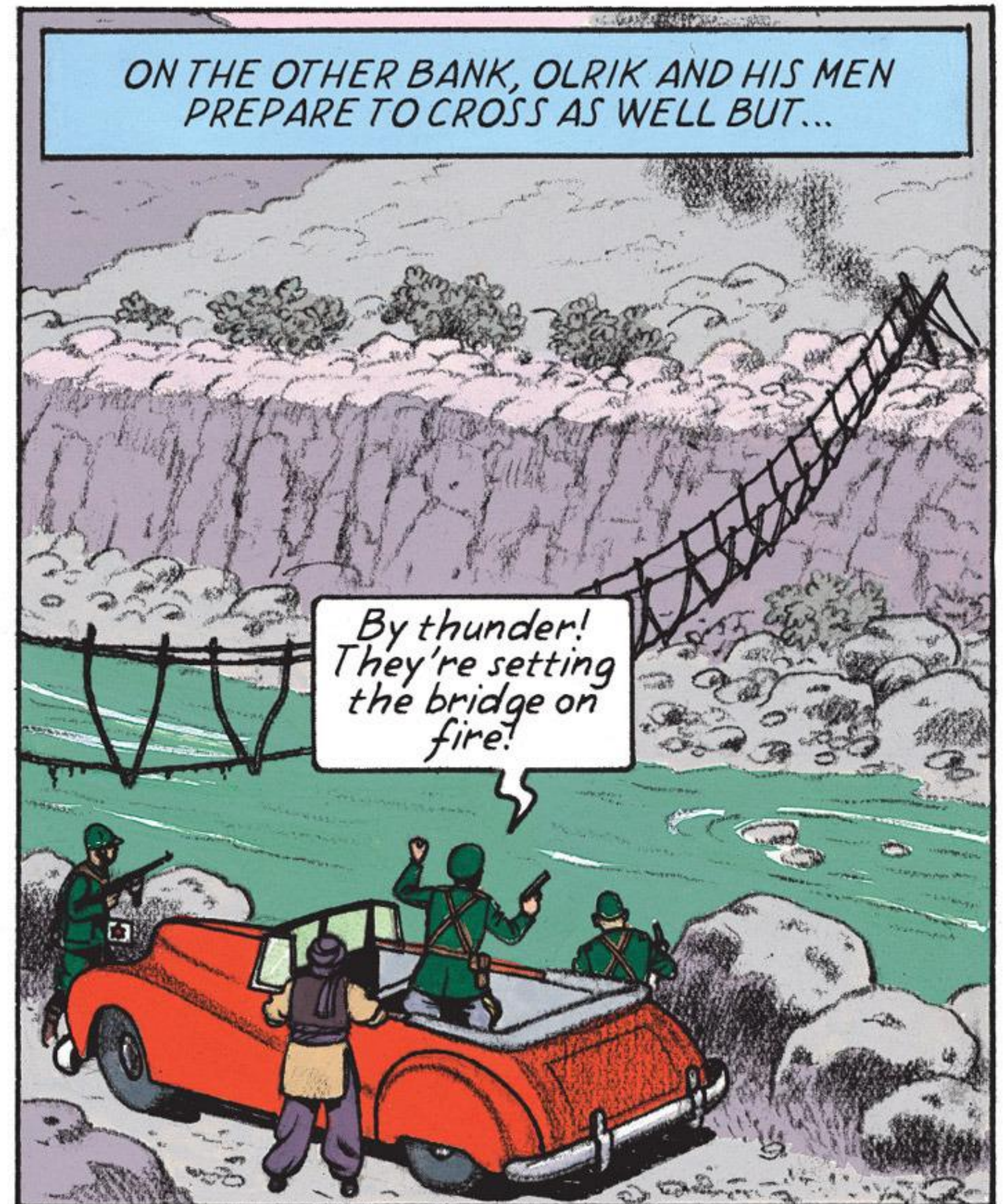
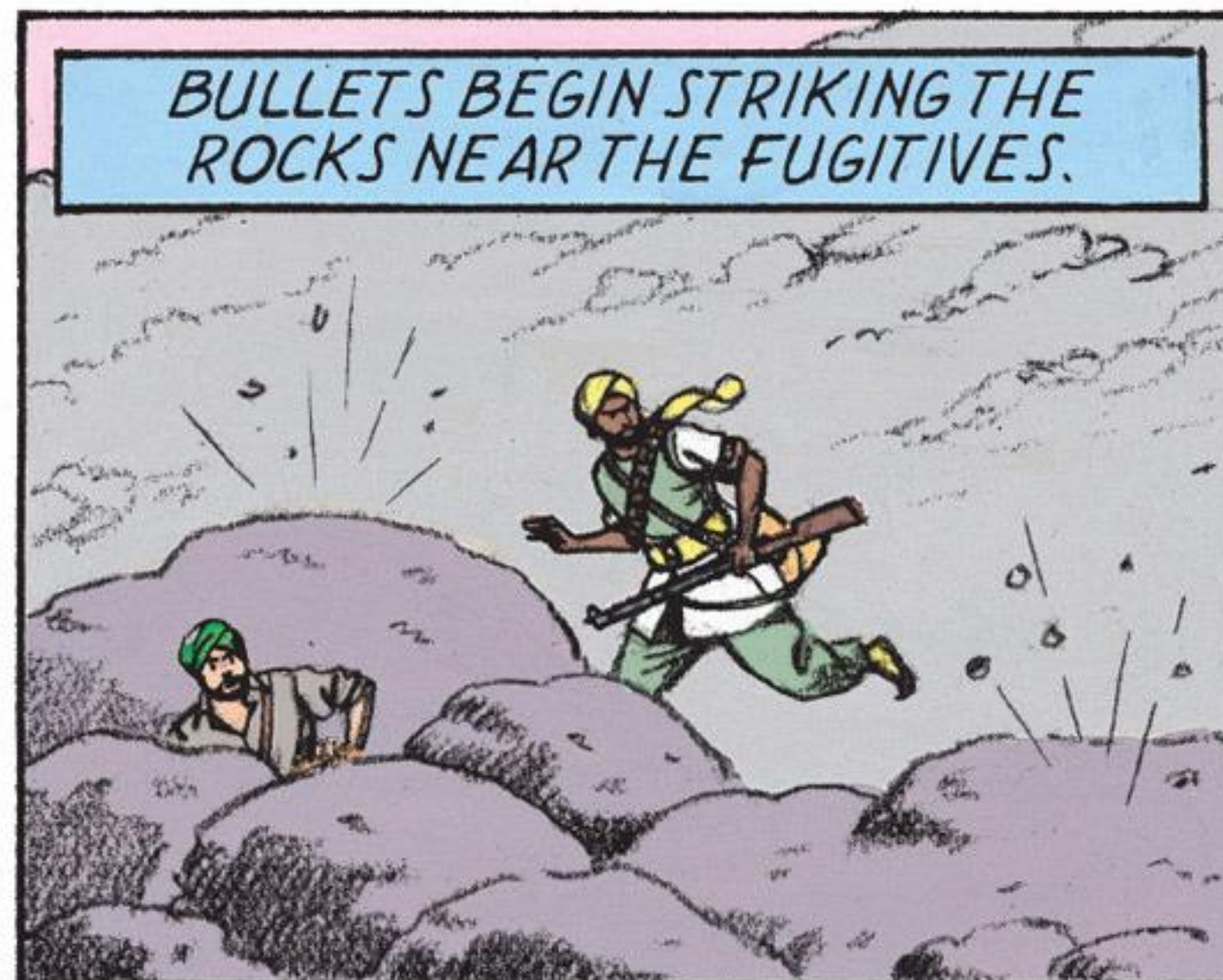


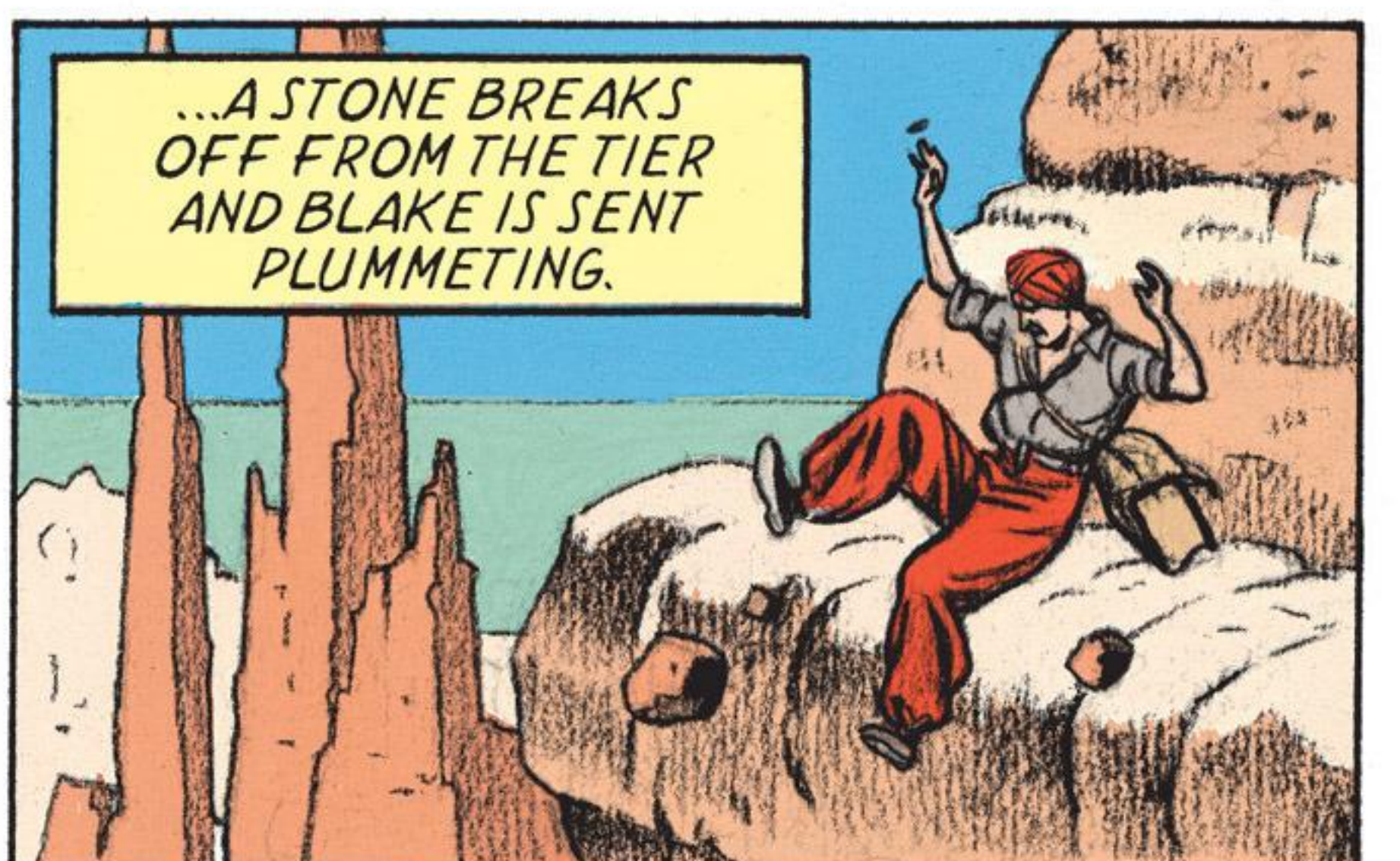
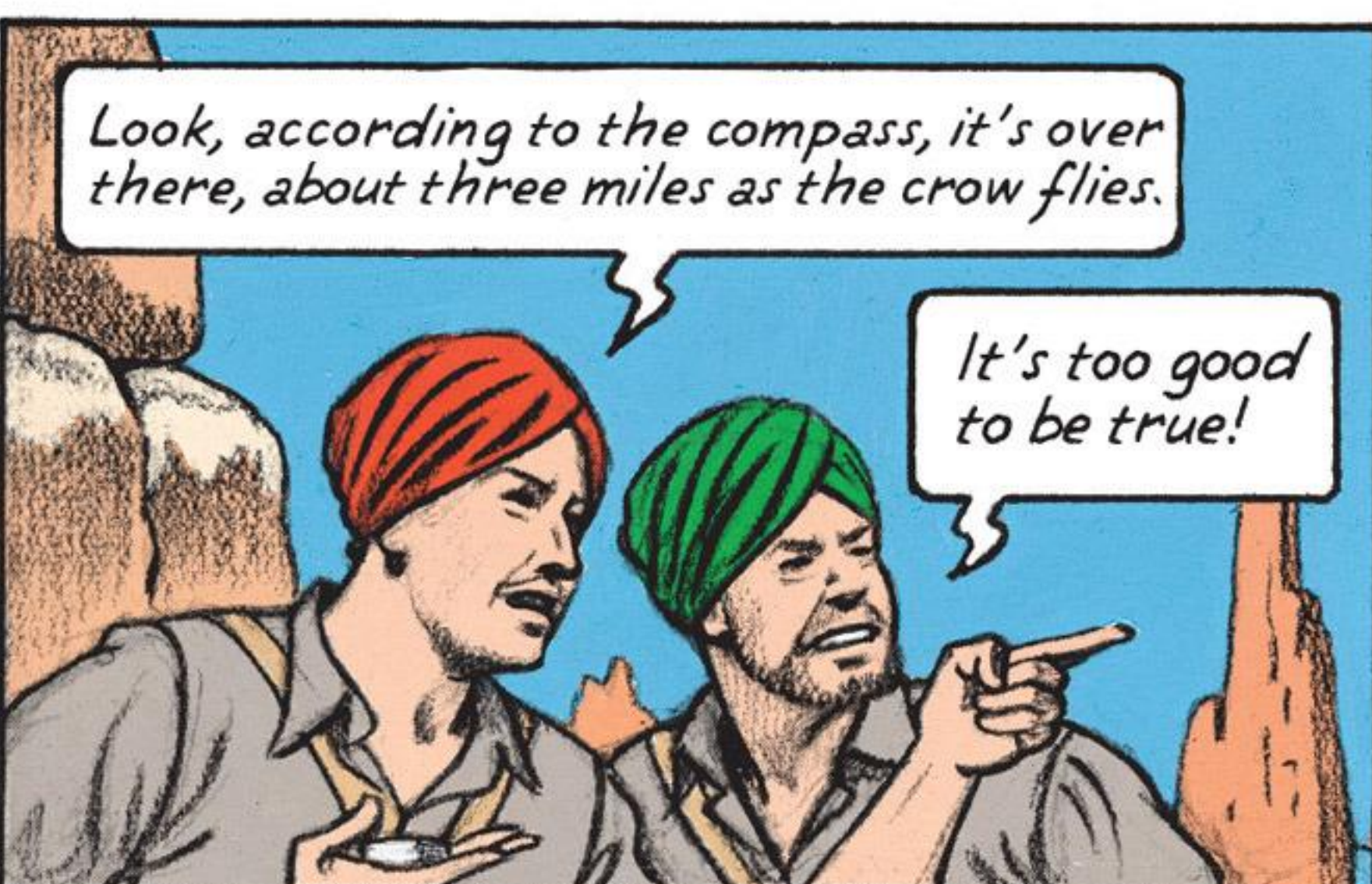
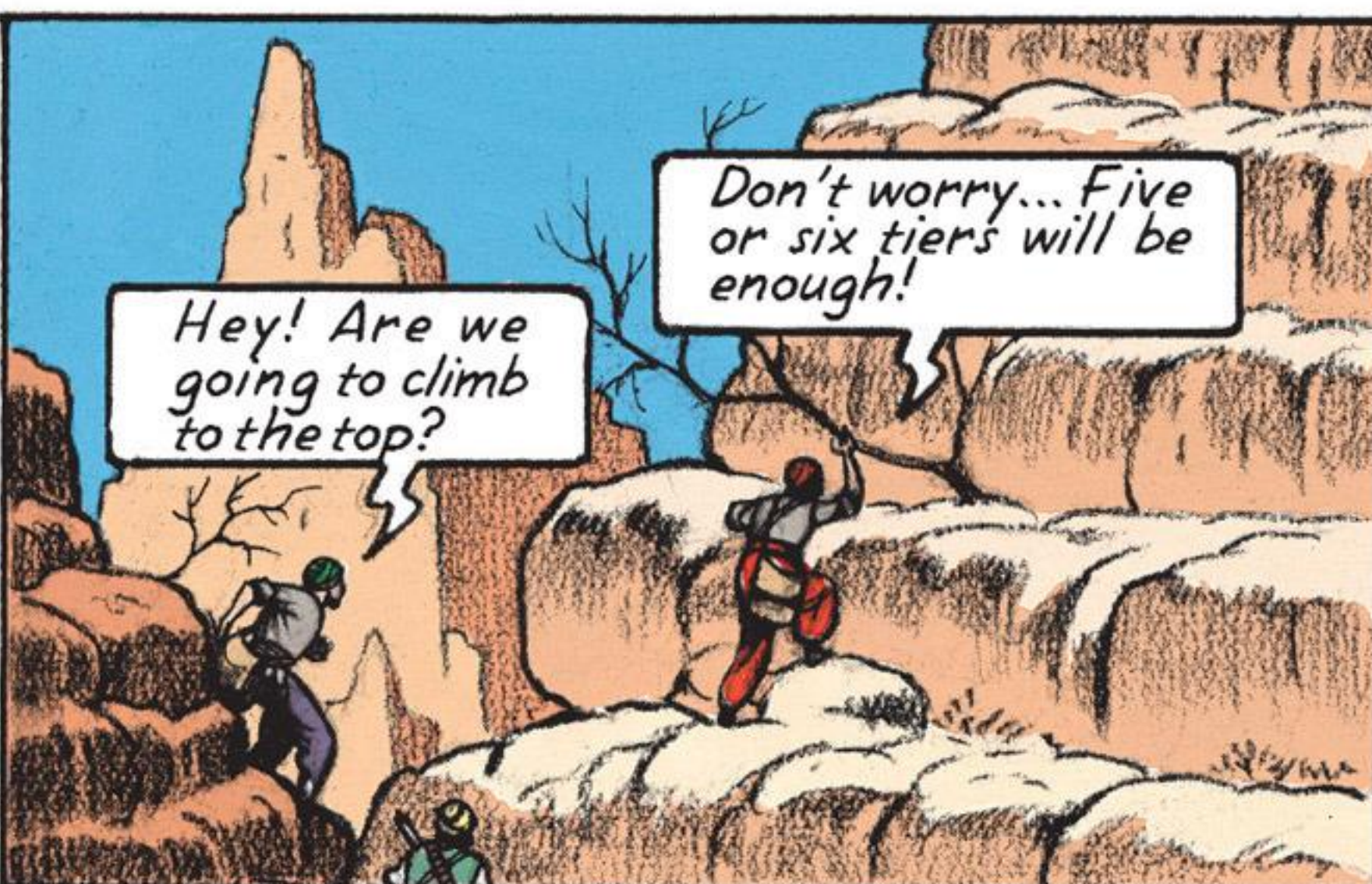
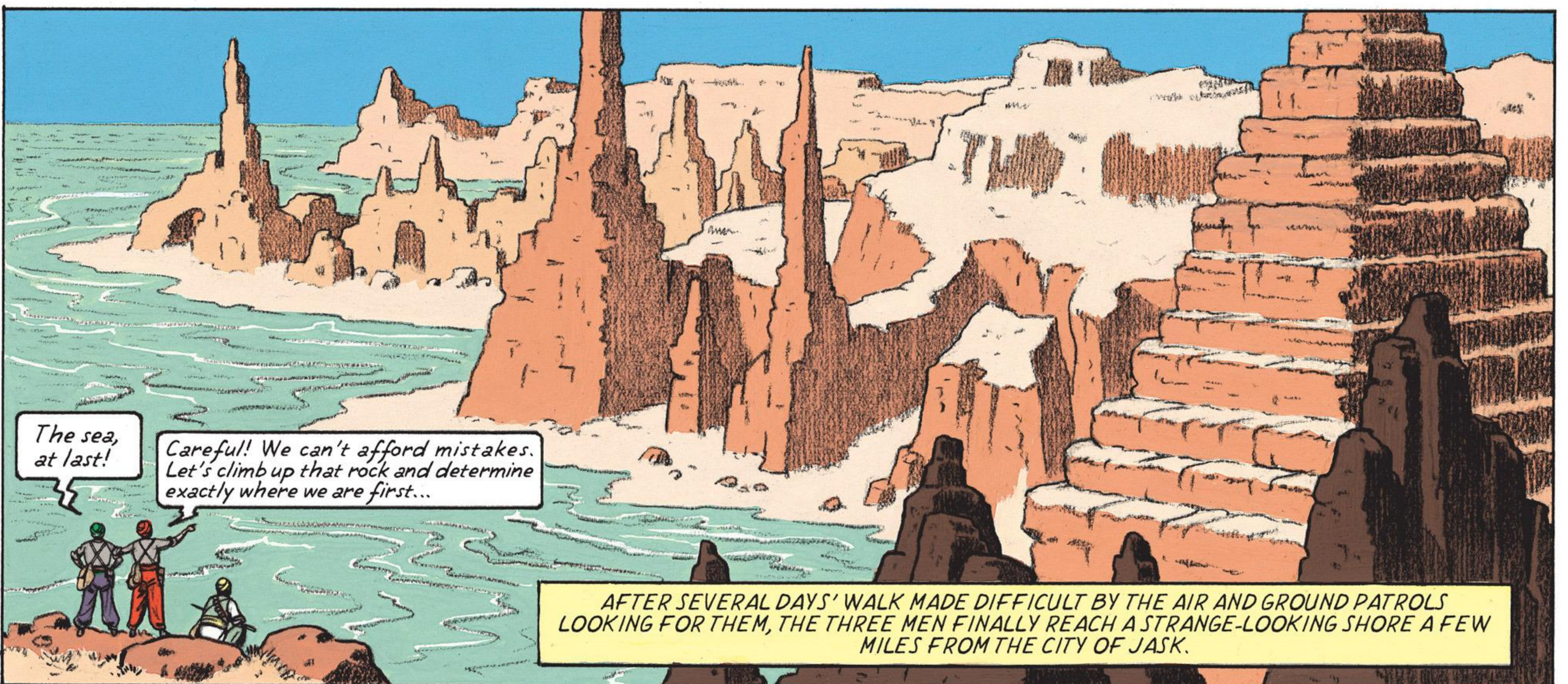


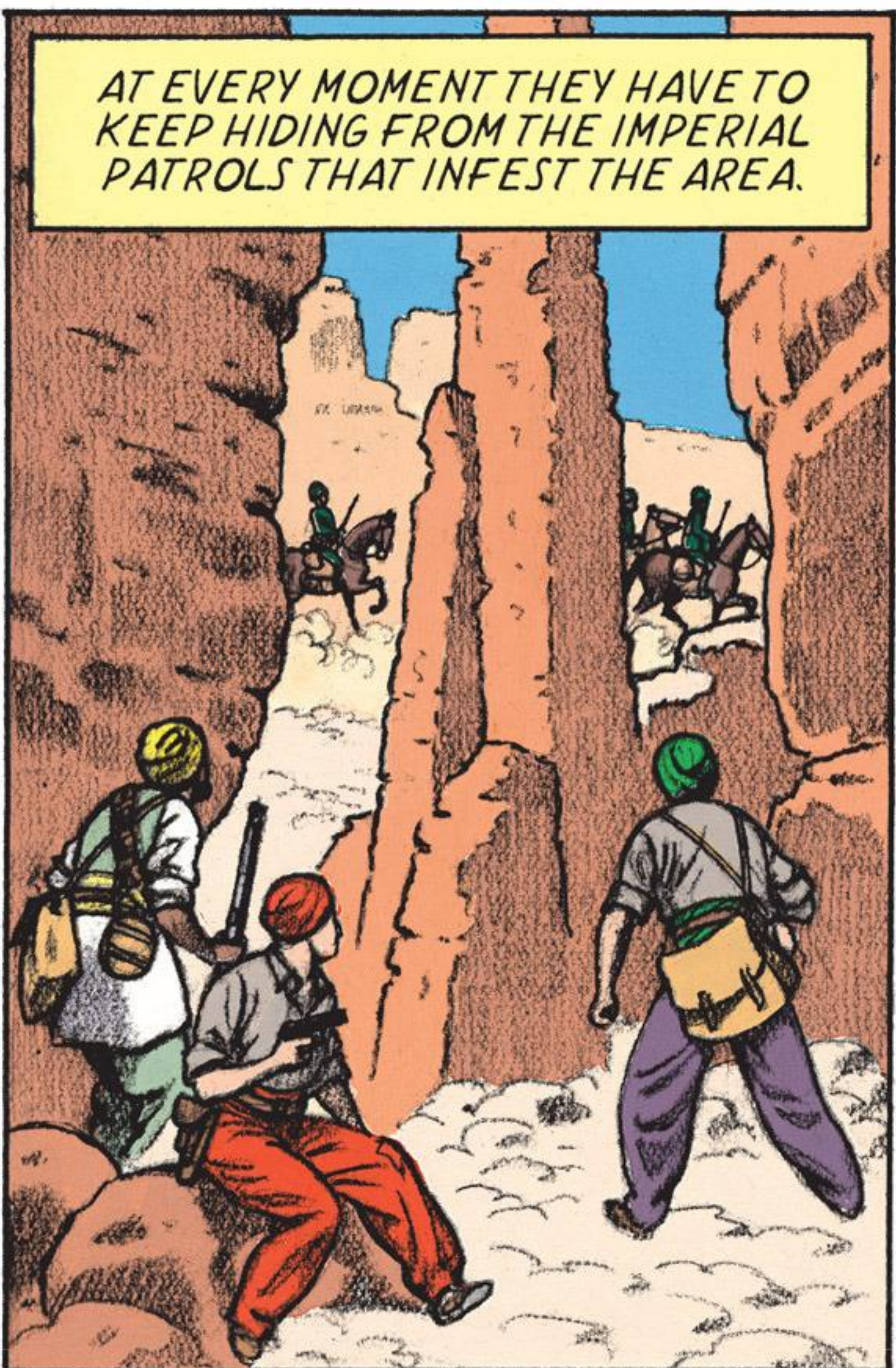
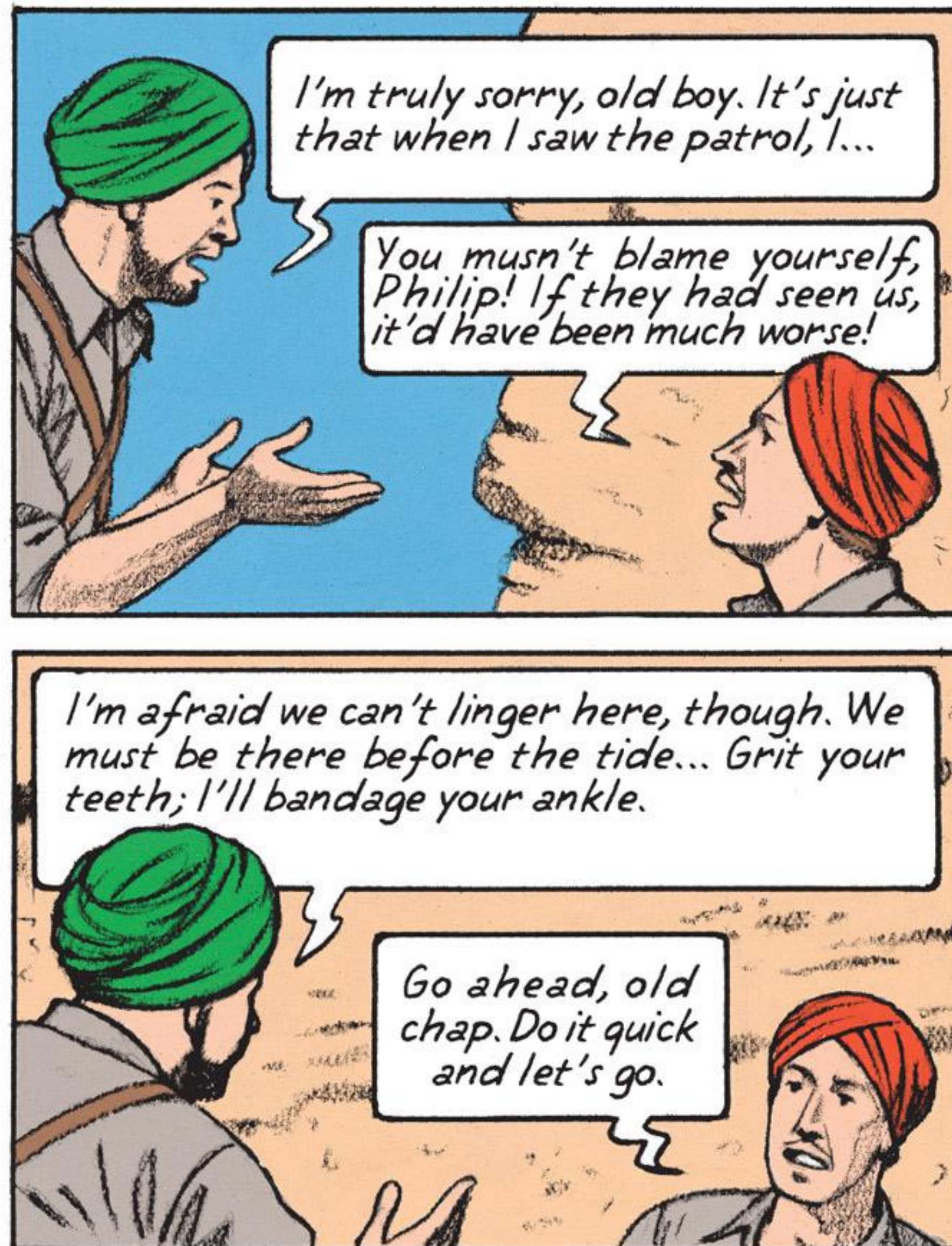
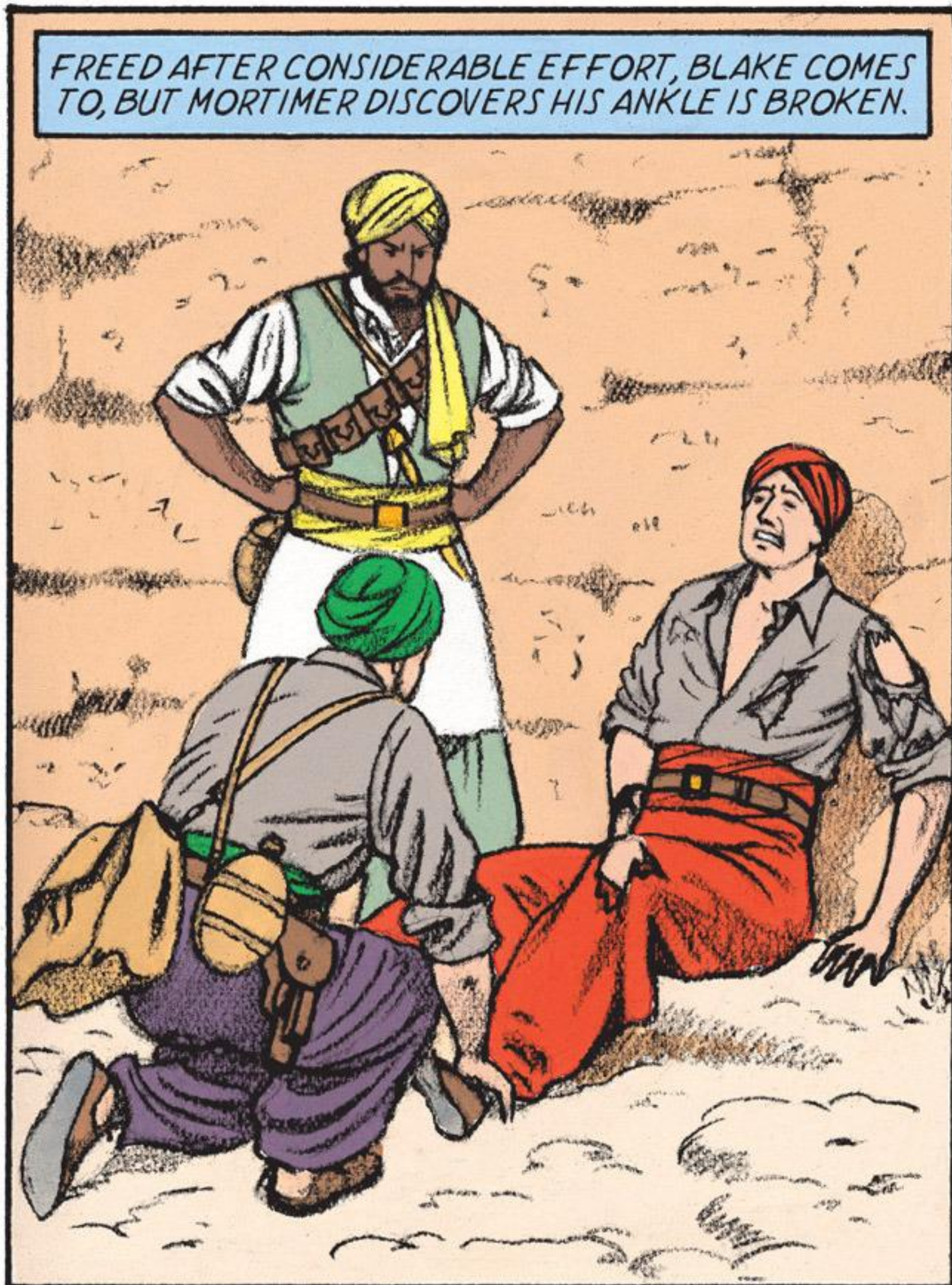
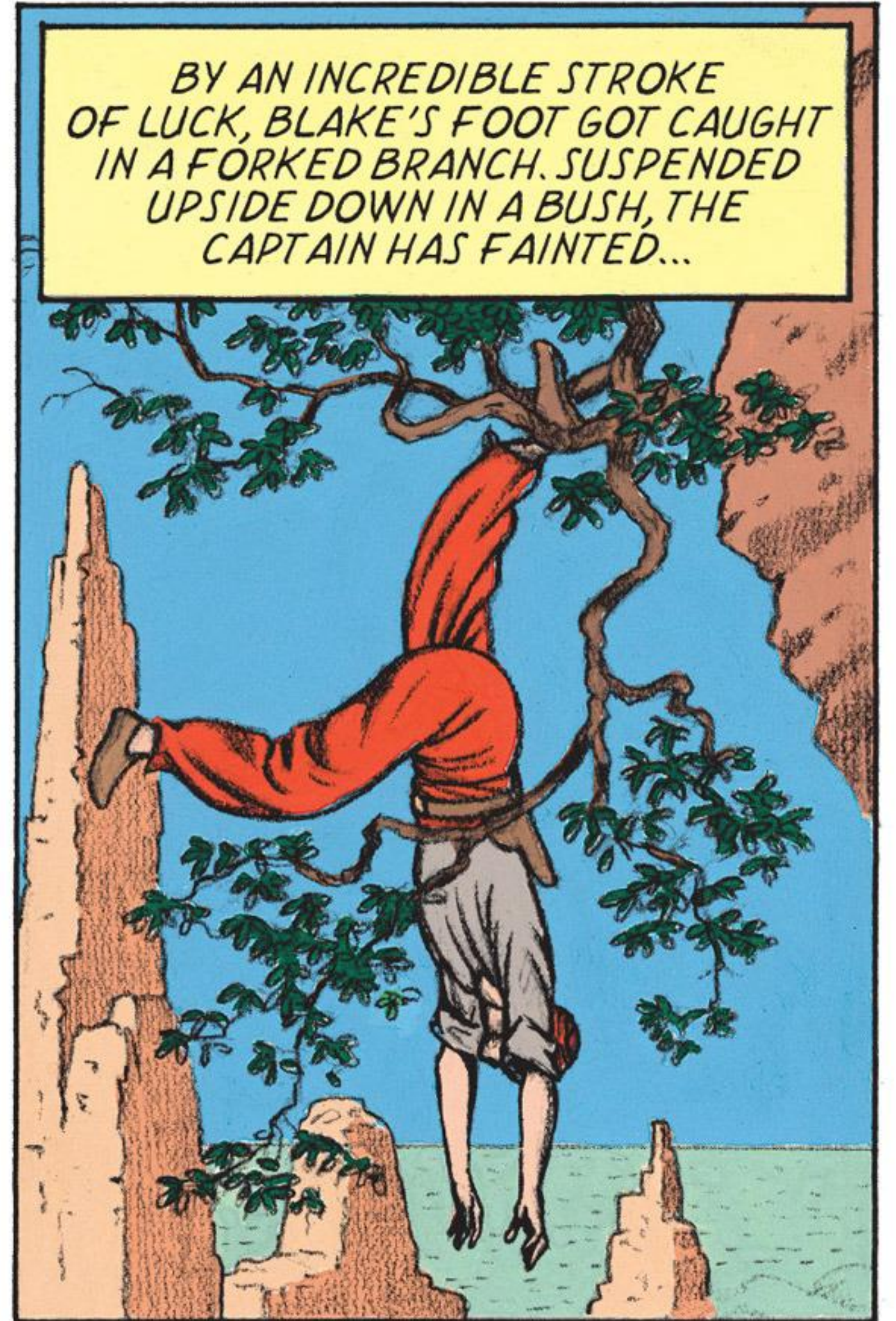
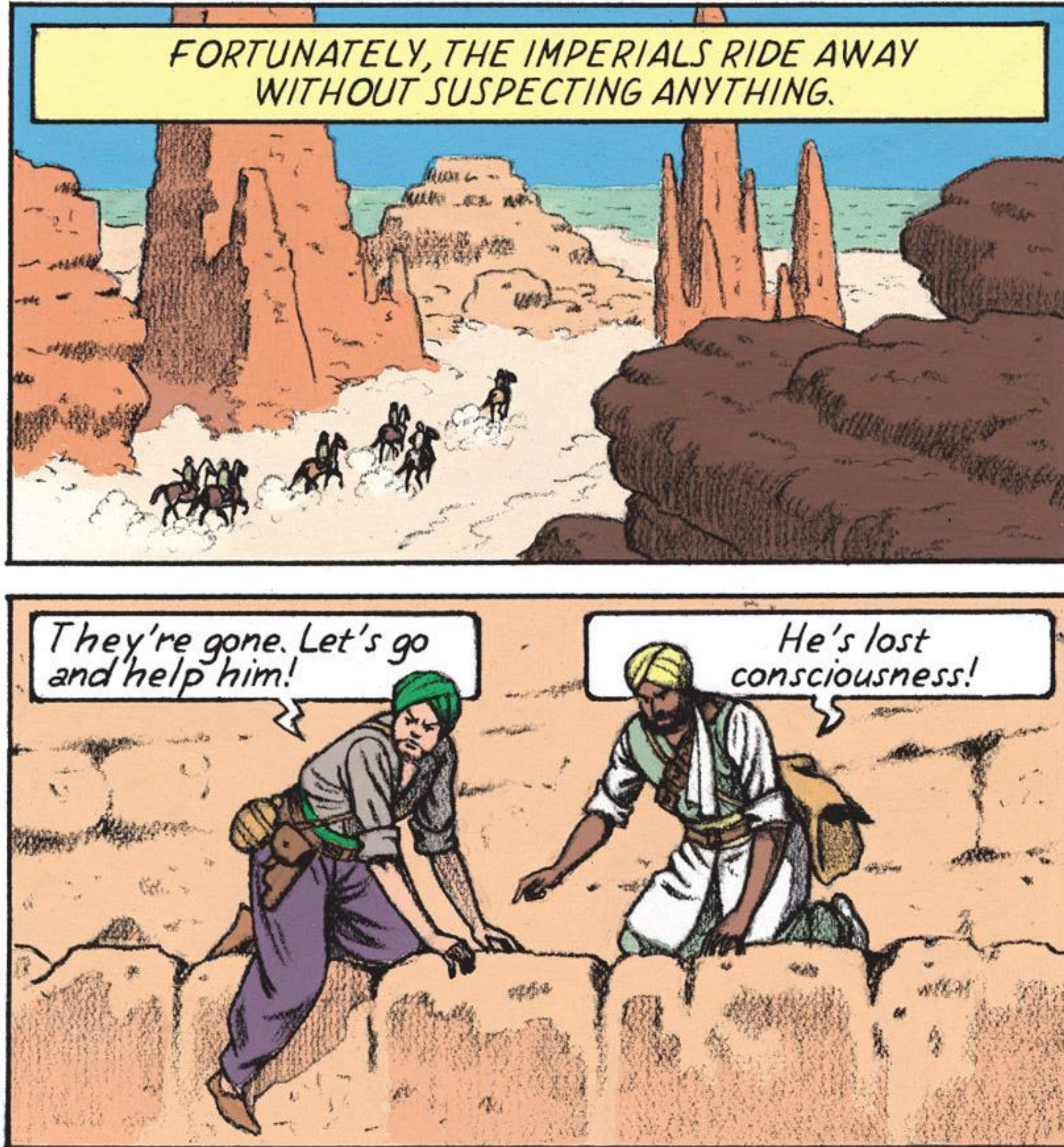
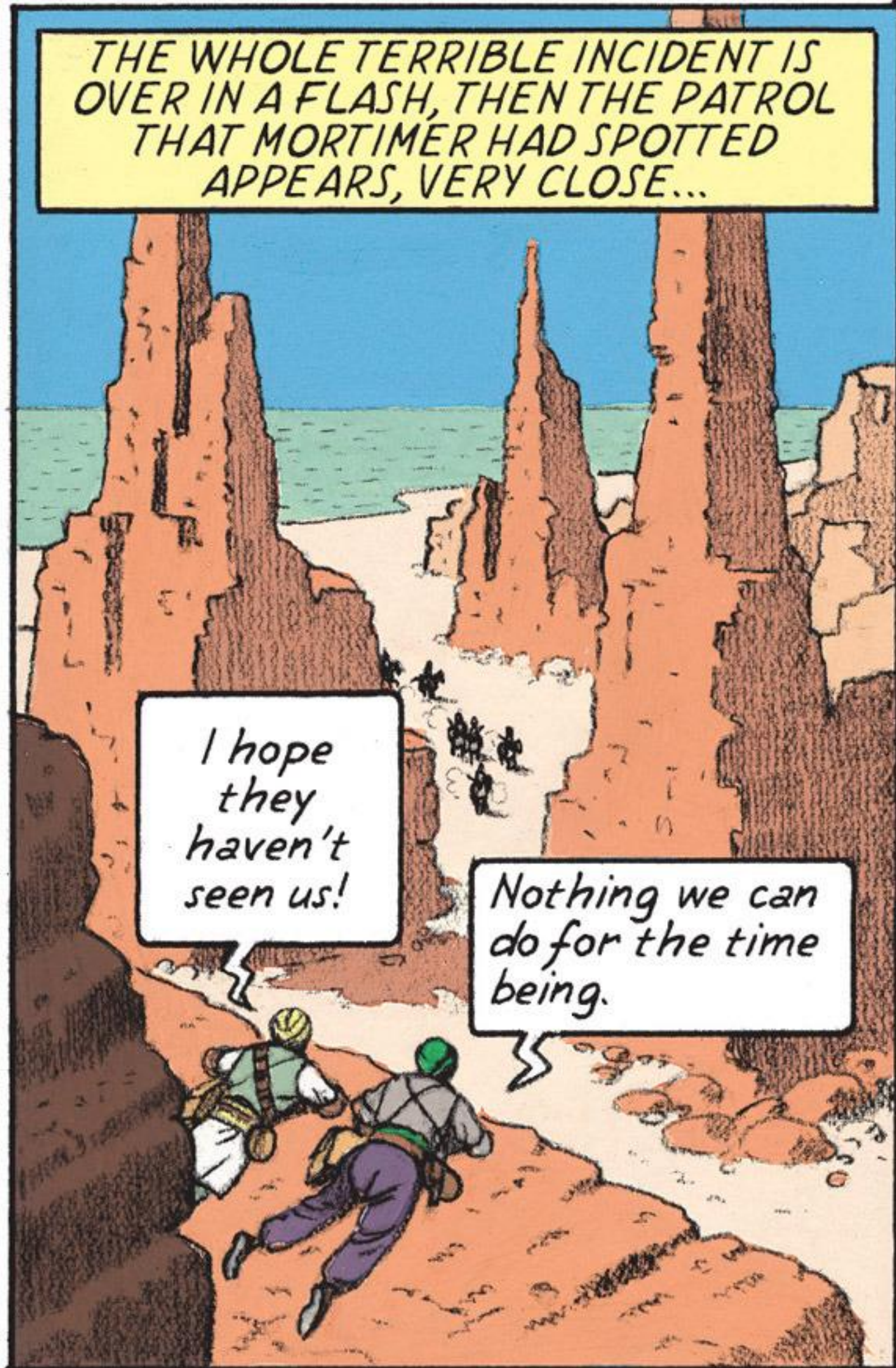
THE BURST MARKS THE SIGNAL TO ATTACK!...











HORRIFIED, BLAKE DISCOVERS HE NO LONGER HAS THE PORTFOLIO HOLDING THE PRECIOUS DOCUMENTS.

Gone! This is a disaster! I must have lost them when I fell... See, my shirt is torn.

Well, there's no choice. We must find them at all cost. The place is easy to recognise: It was that strange pyramid. I'll go...

...but just to plan for the worst, listen carefully. You know the base can only be accessed at low tide? Well, if I'm not back by then - in about an hour - don't wait for me. Even if the Swordfish were to be lost for our cause, remember what England and the world expect of us. Go; don't hesitate. Nasir will help you.

You're a good man, Mortimer. Take my pistol; you may need it. God be with you, old boy.

Thank you, Blake. I'm leaving you my pack. See you soon... hopefully.

AFTER SHARING ONE LAST HANDSHAKE WITH HIS COMPANIONS, MORTIMER WALKS OFF INTO THE NIGHT.

Goodbye!

Good luck!

May Allah guide you!

CAREFULLY, WITH ALL HIS SENSES FULLY ALERT, MORTIMER MAKES HIS WAY THROUGH THE FIELD OF BIZARRE ROCK FORMATIONS...

...EVENTUALLY REACHING THE PYRAMID, ITS ENORMOUS MASS OF STONE RISING HIGH AMONG THE MYSTERIOUS SHADOWS.

Ah, there it is!

SEARCHING WARILY THROUGH THE DARKNESS, HE STARTS LOOKING...

Can't find it! It's pitch-black out here!

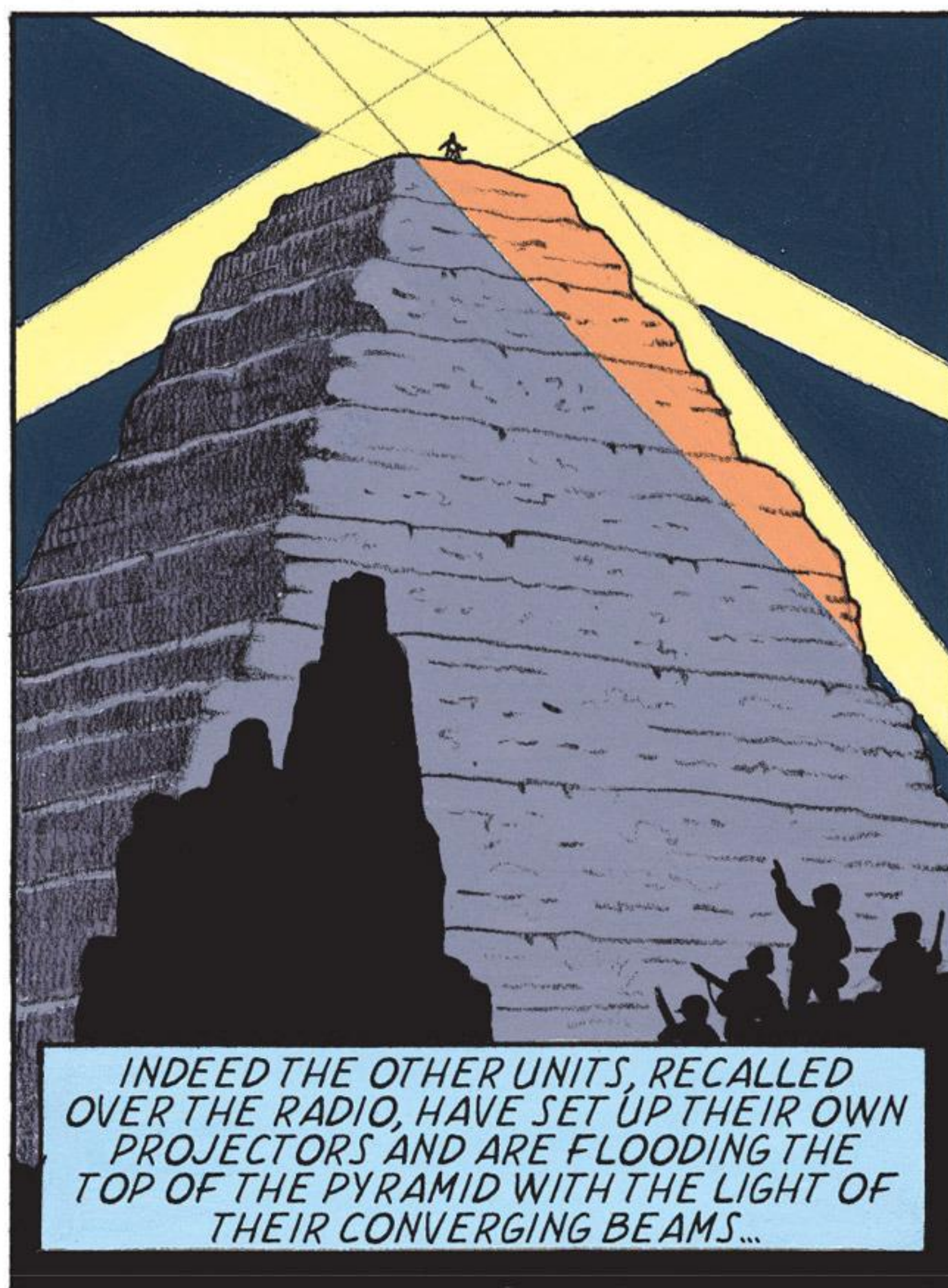
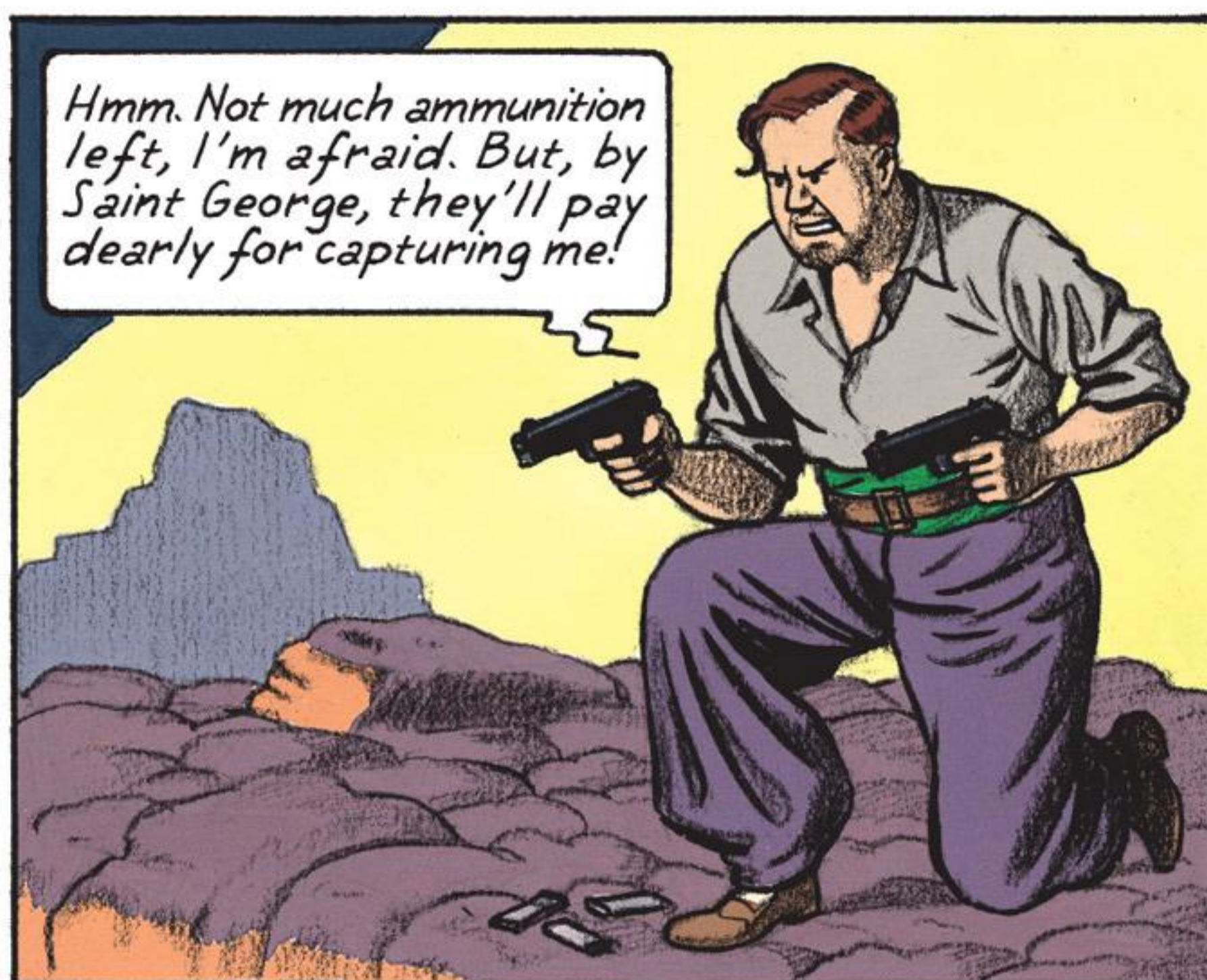
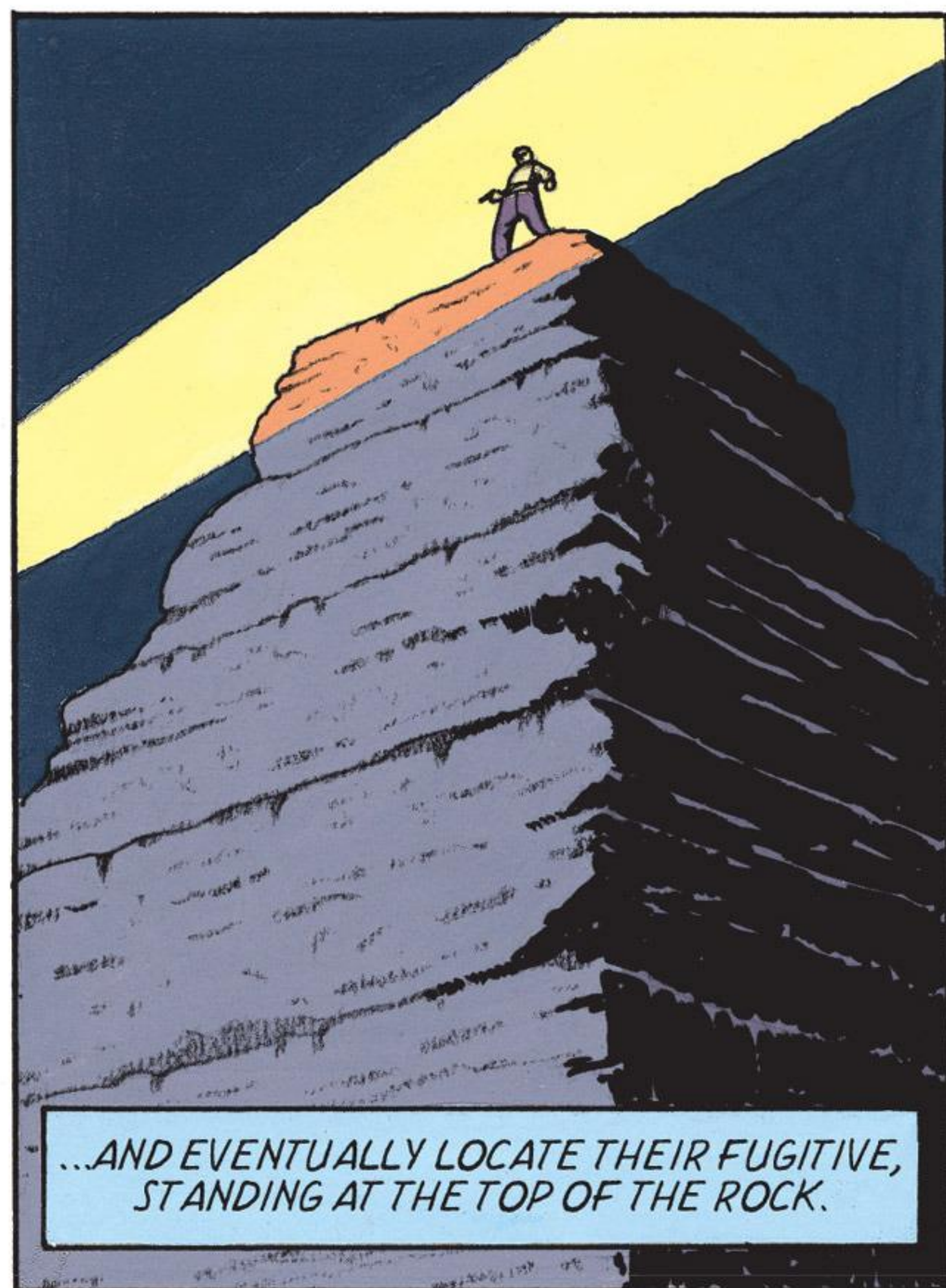
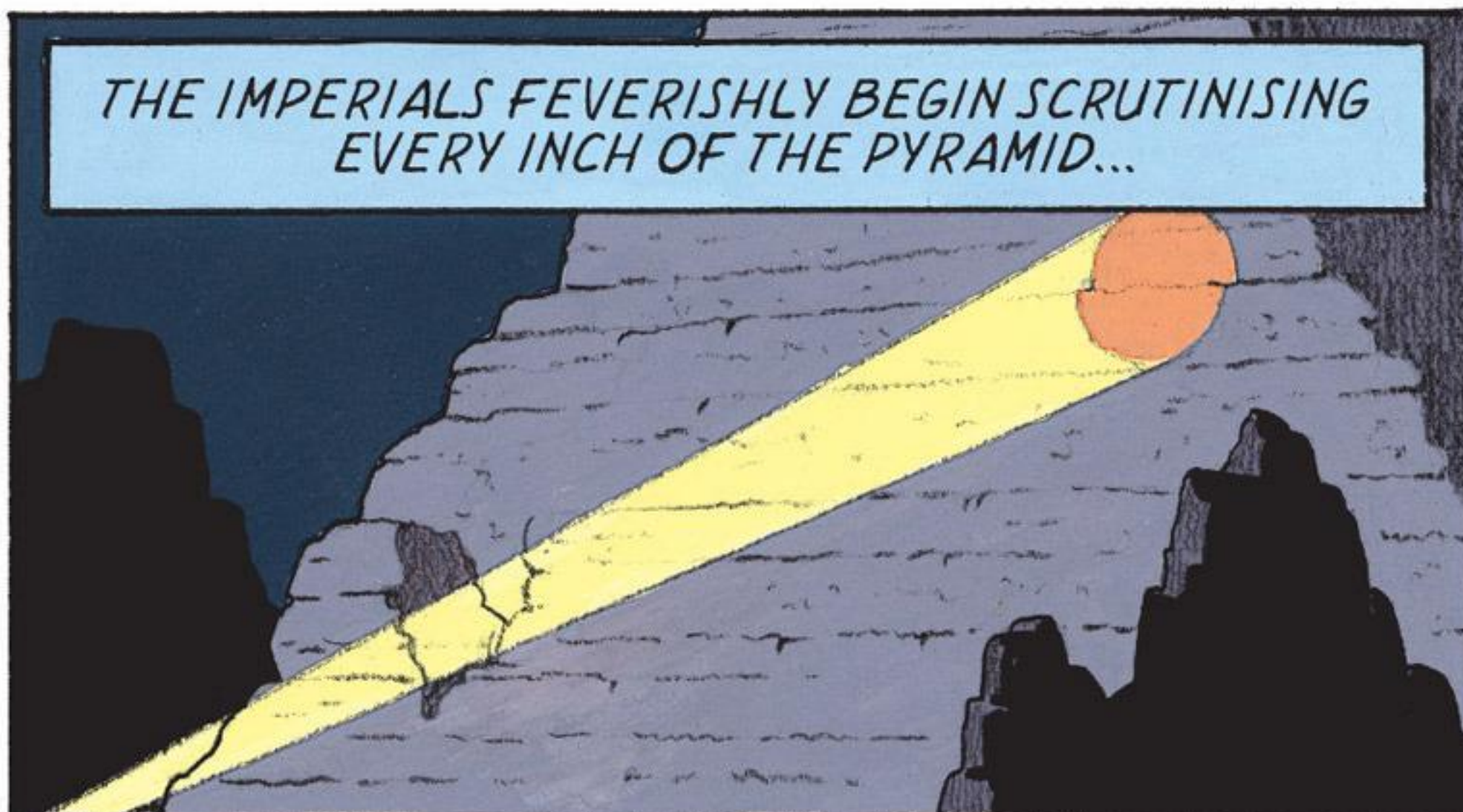
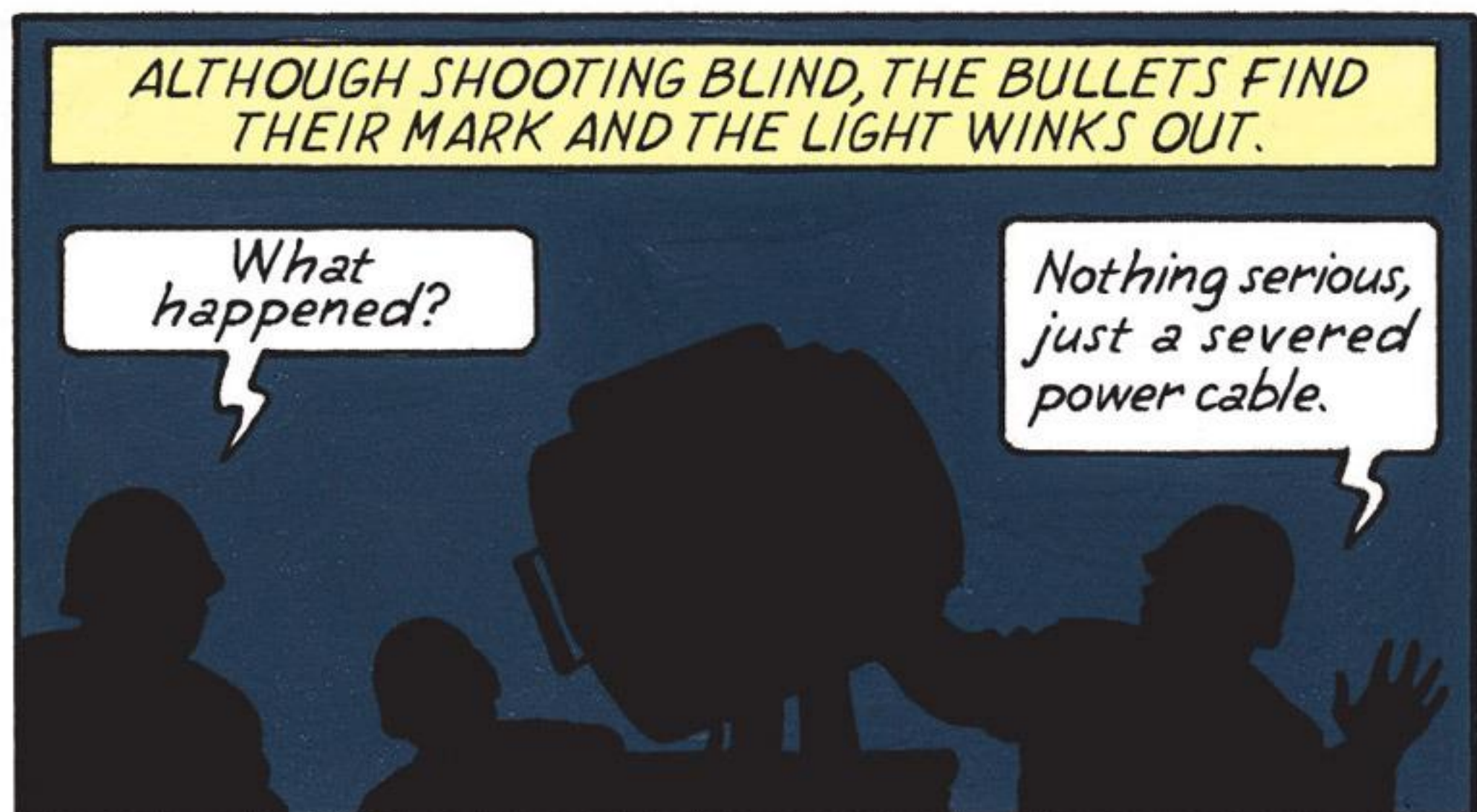
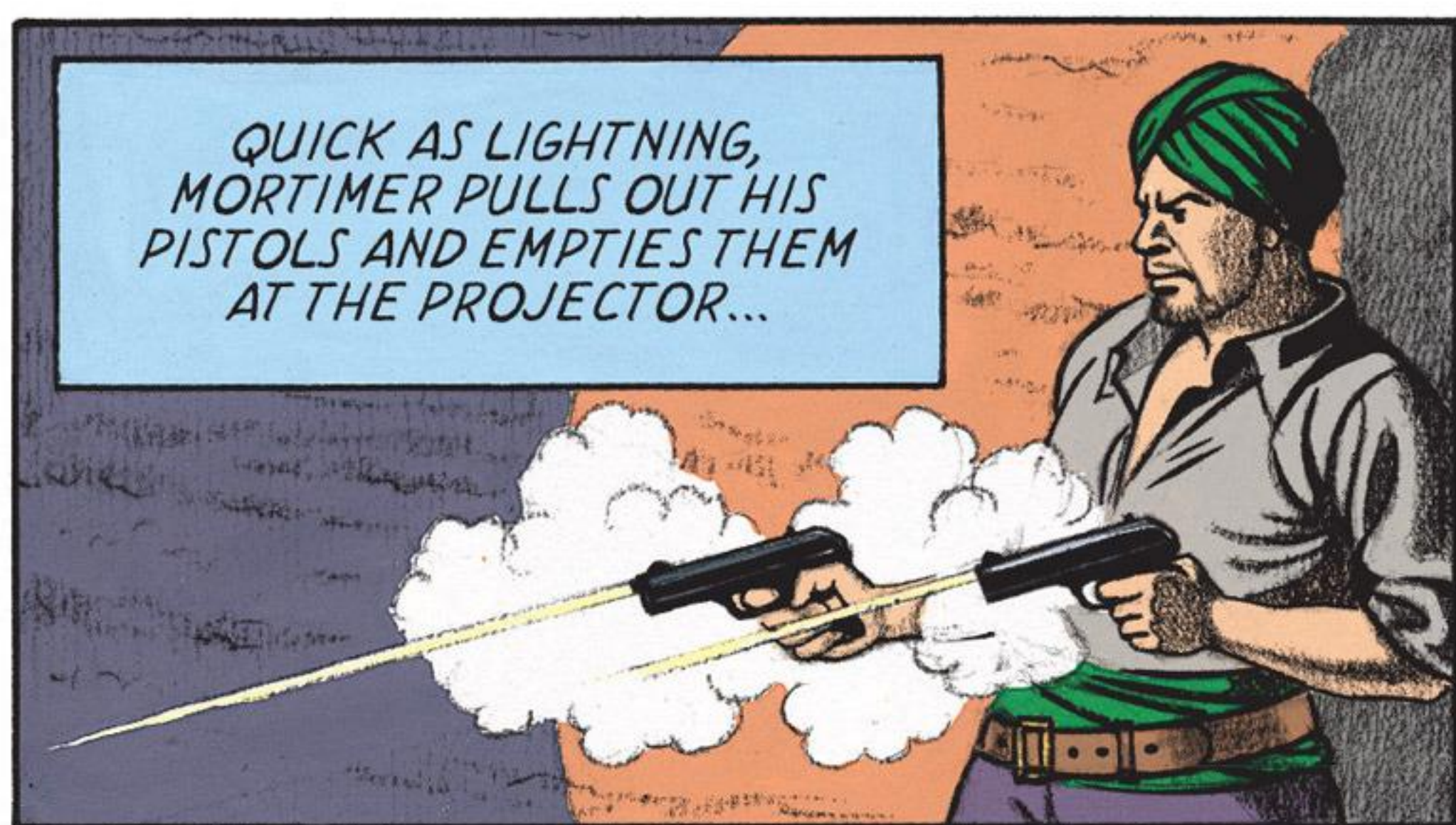
SUDDENLY, JUST AS HE'S REACHING THE SPOT WHERE THE ACCIDENT HAPPENED, A BEAM OF LIGHT CAST BY A PROJECTOR COMES TO REST ON THE ROCK A FEW YARDS AWAY FROM HIM.

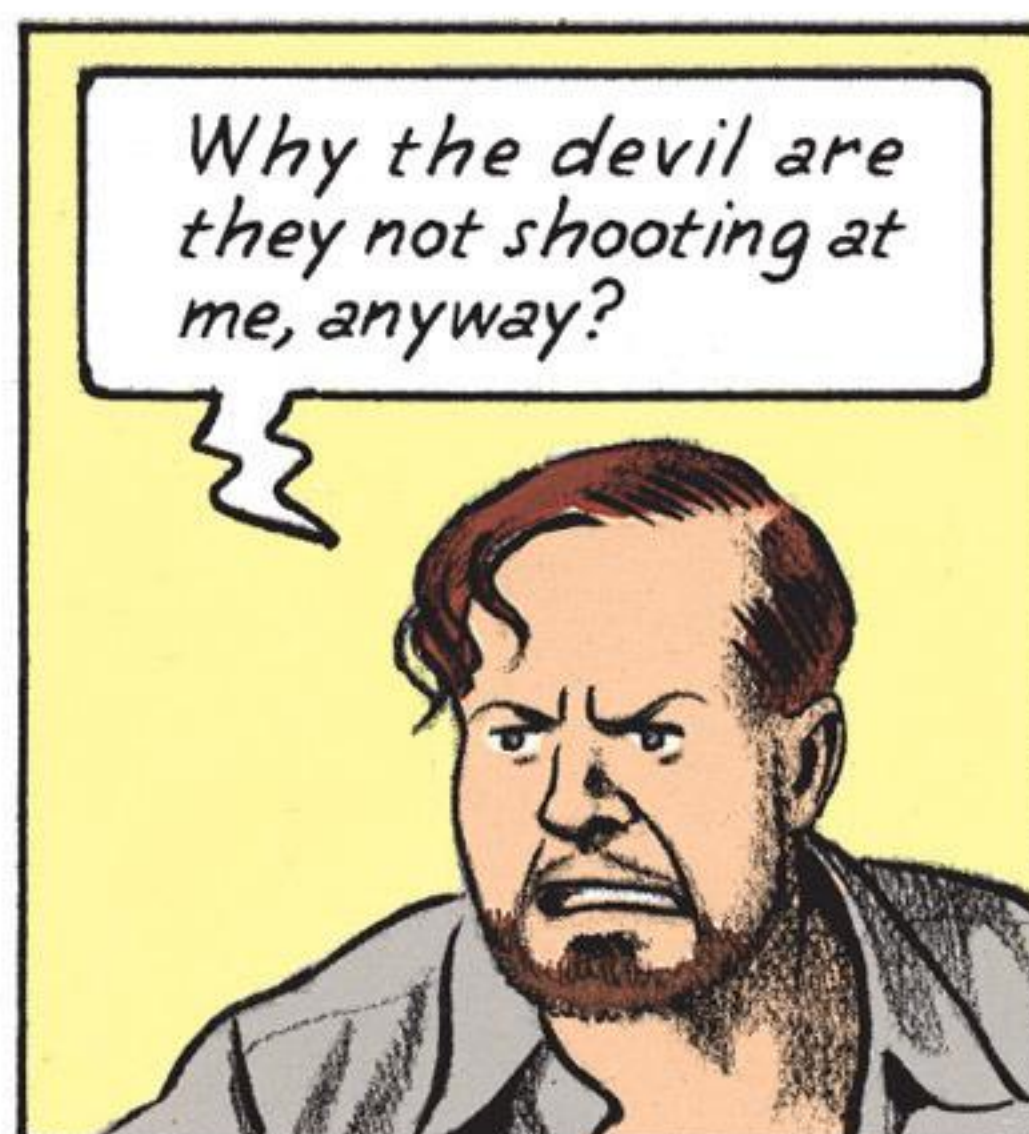
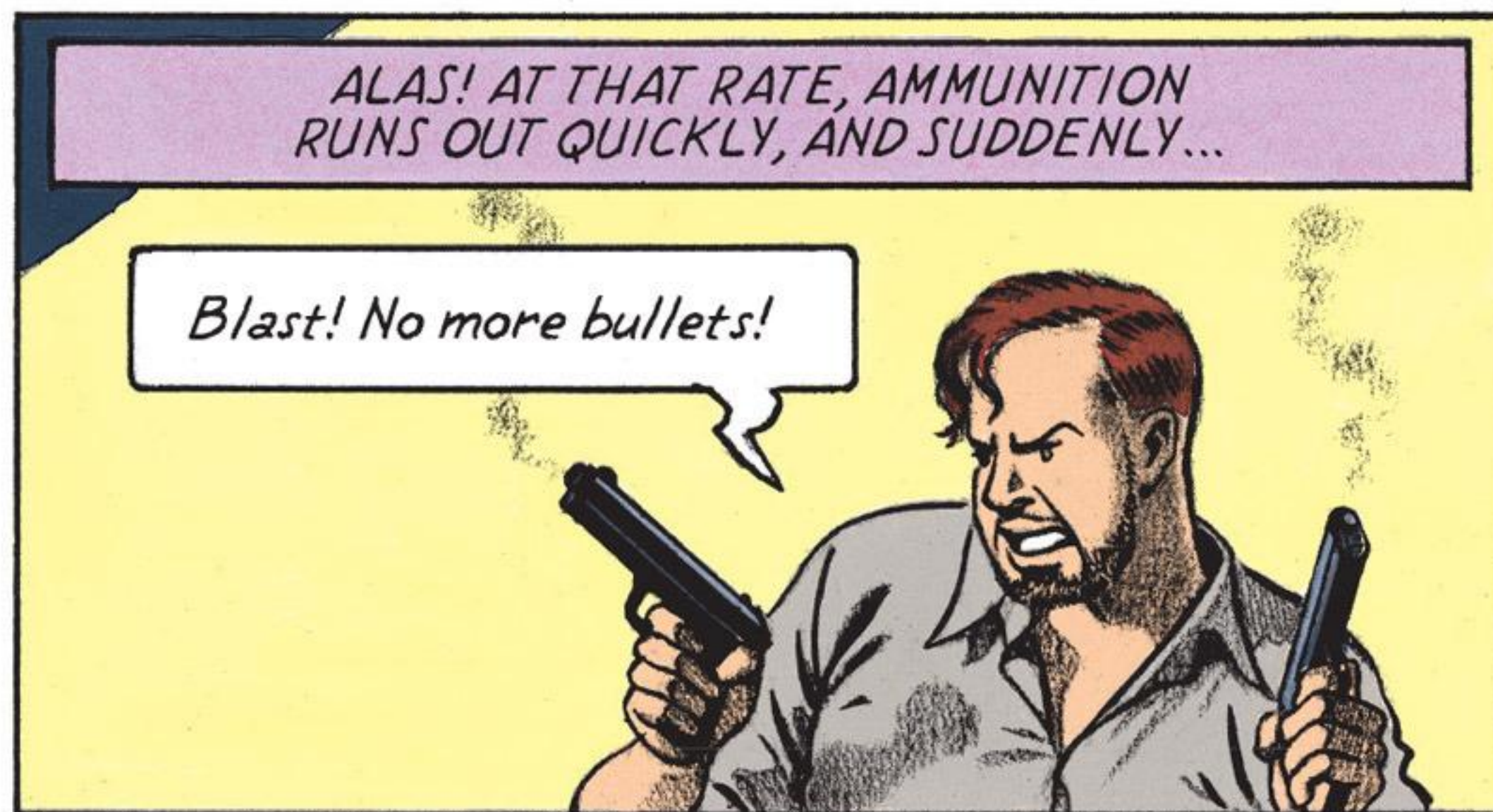
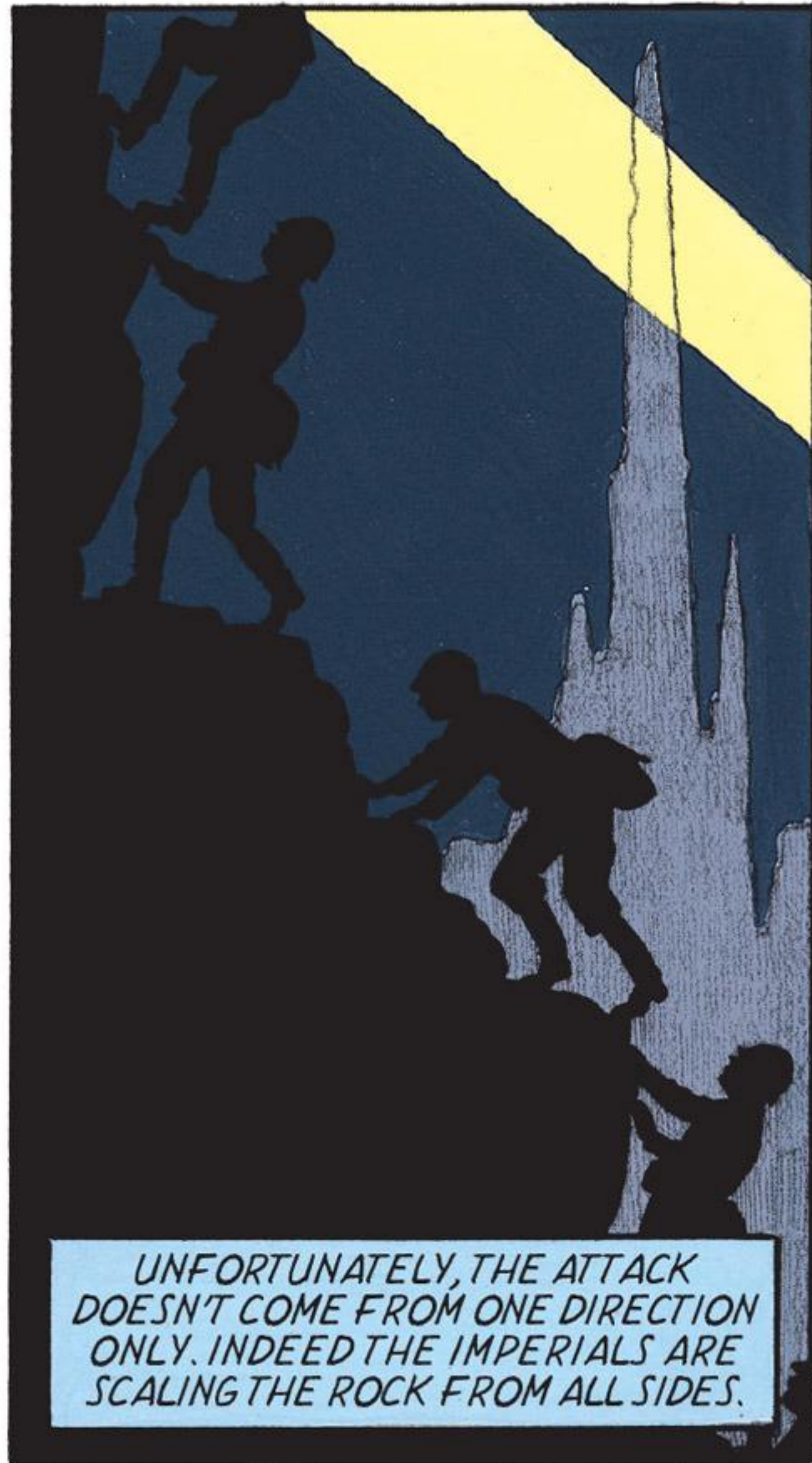
THE CIRCLE OF LIGHT NOW BEGINS TO MOVE METHODICALLY ALONG THE WALL, CHASING AFTER MORTIMER...

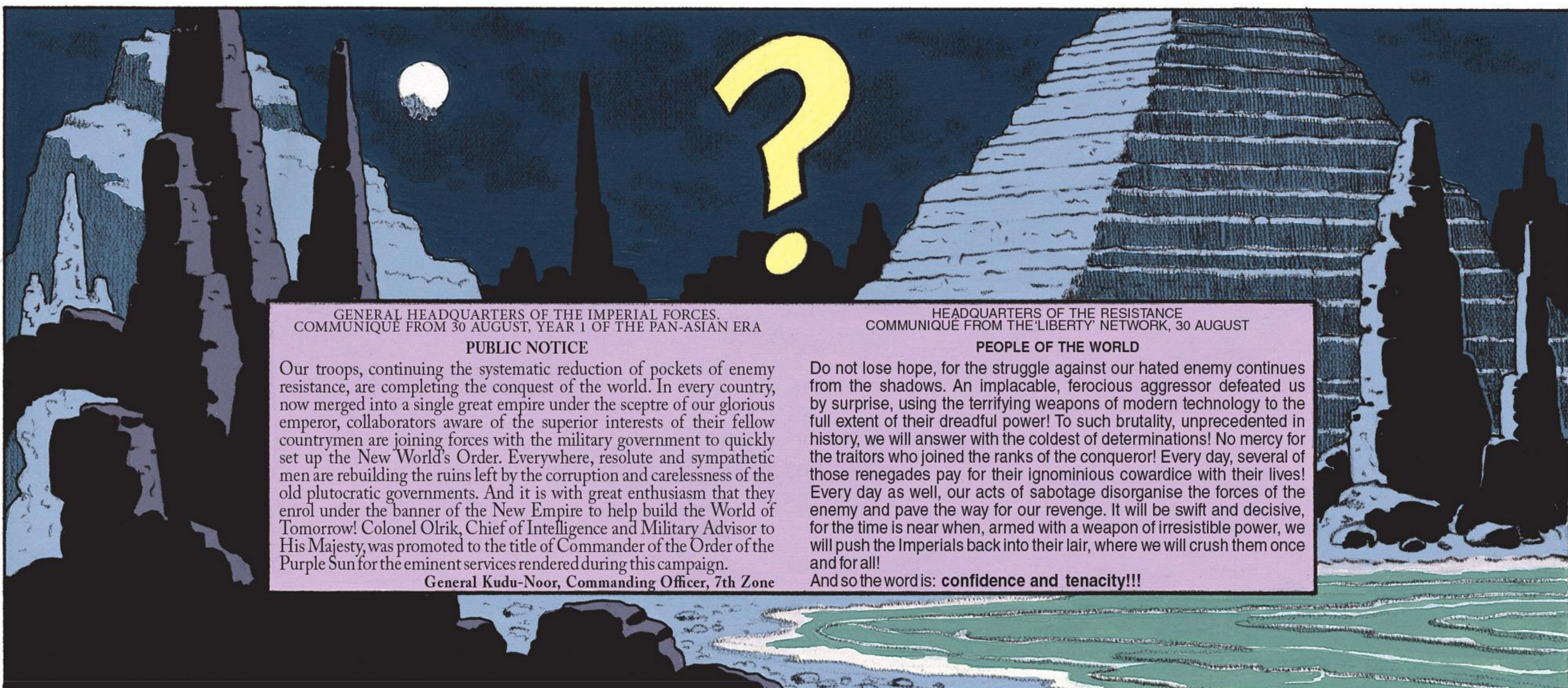
Blast it!!!

PETRIFIED, HE REALISES THAT THE TIER HE'S ON HAS COLLAPSED, CREATING AN IMPASSABLE CHASM AHEAD OF HIM... WHILE THE LIGHT APPROACHES, RELENTLESS...

!?







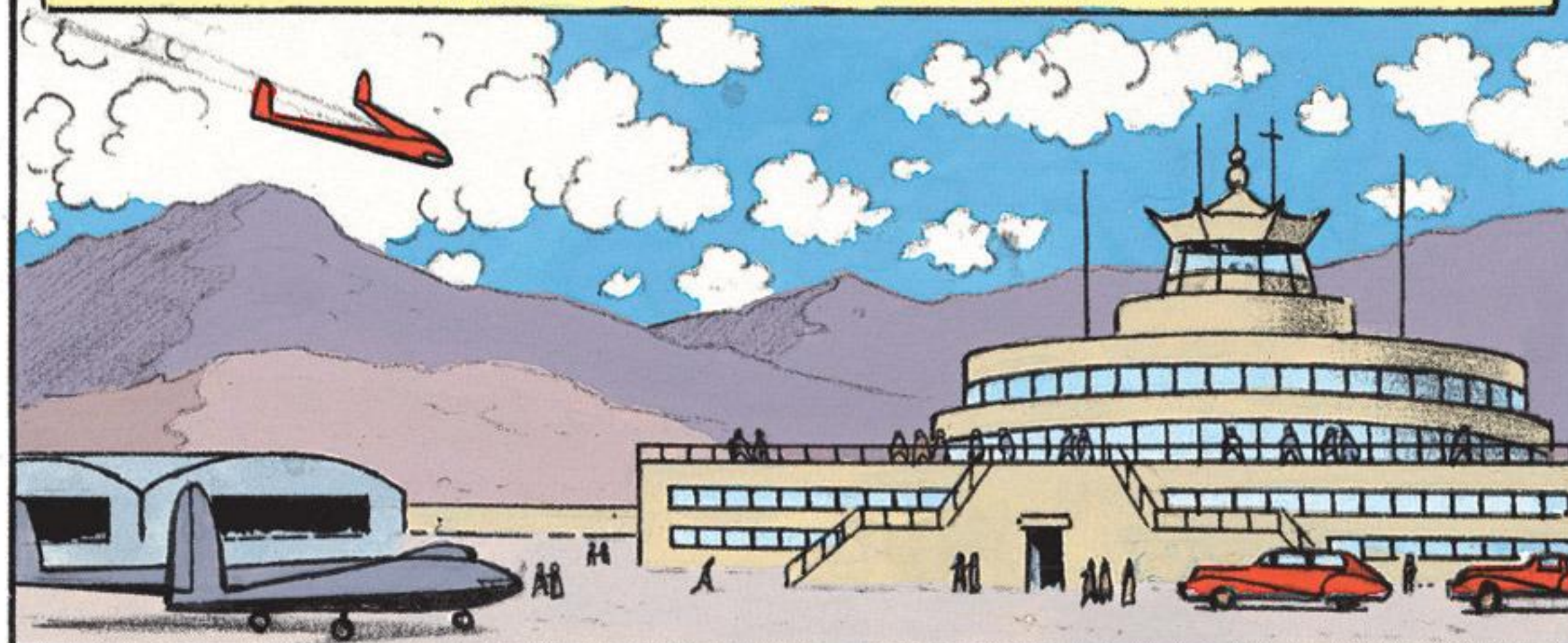
THREE MONTHS HAVE GONE BY SINCE PROFESSOR MORTIMER WAS CAPTURED AND CAPTAIN BLAKE AND SERGEANT NASIR MYSTERIOUSLY DISAPPEARED. IN THE SKIES OF LHASA, NEW CAPITAL OF THE WORLD EMPIRE, APPEARS THE RED WING II, PERSONAL PLANE OF COLONEL OLRİK, CHIEF OF INTELLIGENCE.



THE COLONEL IS WORRIED. AN ORDER FROM THE EMPEROR HIMSELF HAS SUMMONED HIM BEFORE THE GREAT COUNCIL AT ONCE, SO THAT HE CAN ACCOUNT FOR THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SECRET SERVICE HE HEADS.



AT THE MILITARY AIRPORT, A GROUP OF OFFICERS AWAIT THE COLONEL'S ARRIVAL.



Just between us, I wouldn't want to be in Orlık's shoes...

Nor would I! That Mortimer business could cost him dearly...

Yes. Apparently he doesn't have many friends among the Great Council...

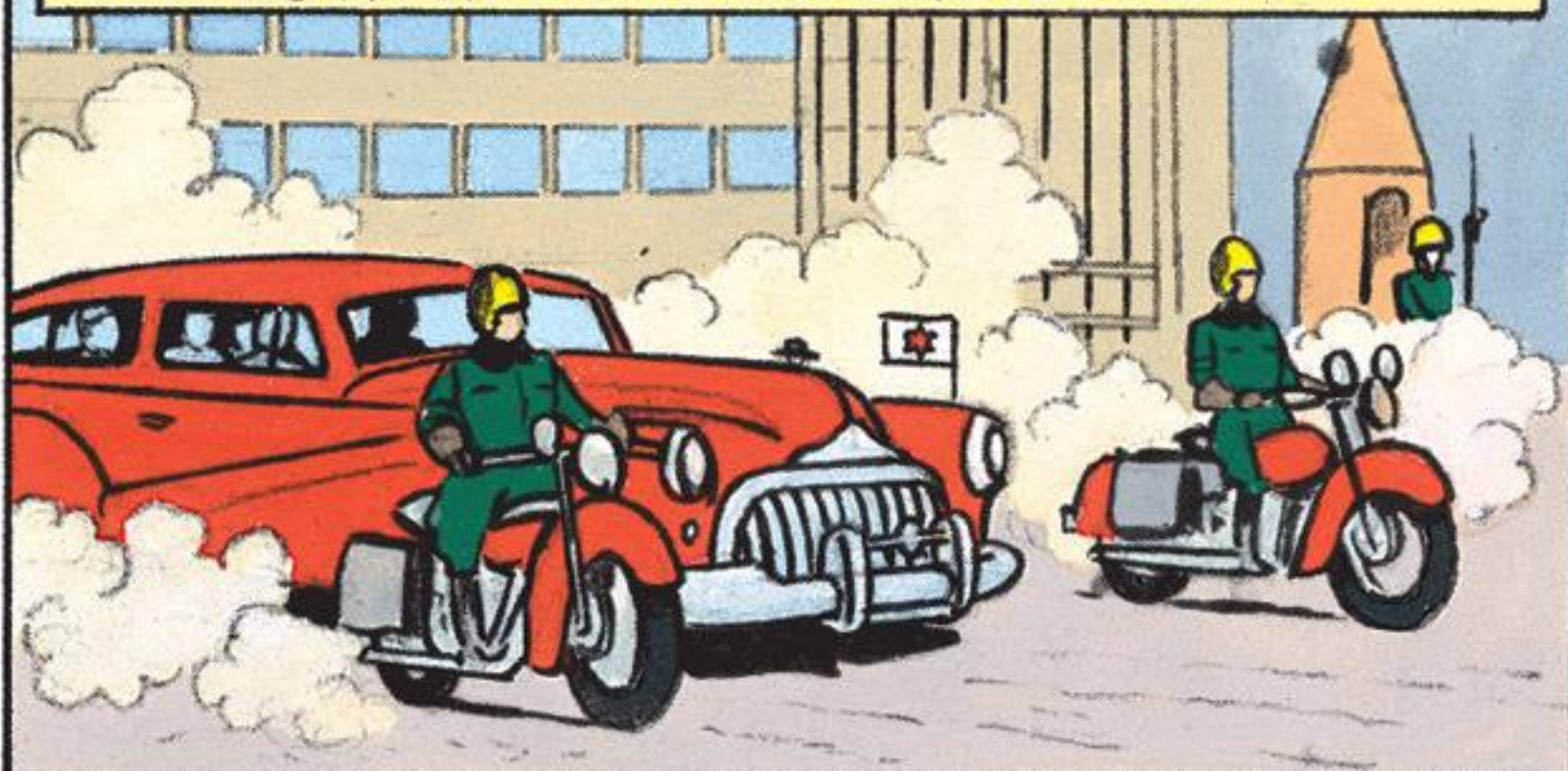


Colonel, His Majesty has asked us to take you to the palace immediately. The Council has already convened.

Already!? Very well, gentlemen. Lead on.



ESCORTED BY MOTORCYCLE POLICEMEN, THE CARS OF OLRİK AND HIS PARTY DRIVE TOWARDS THE IMPERIAL PALACE.



A SHORT WHILE LATER, AS THE CAVALCADE CROSSES THE NEW CITY, OLRİK'S CAR STOPS SUDDENLY.

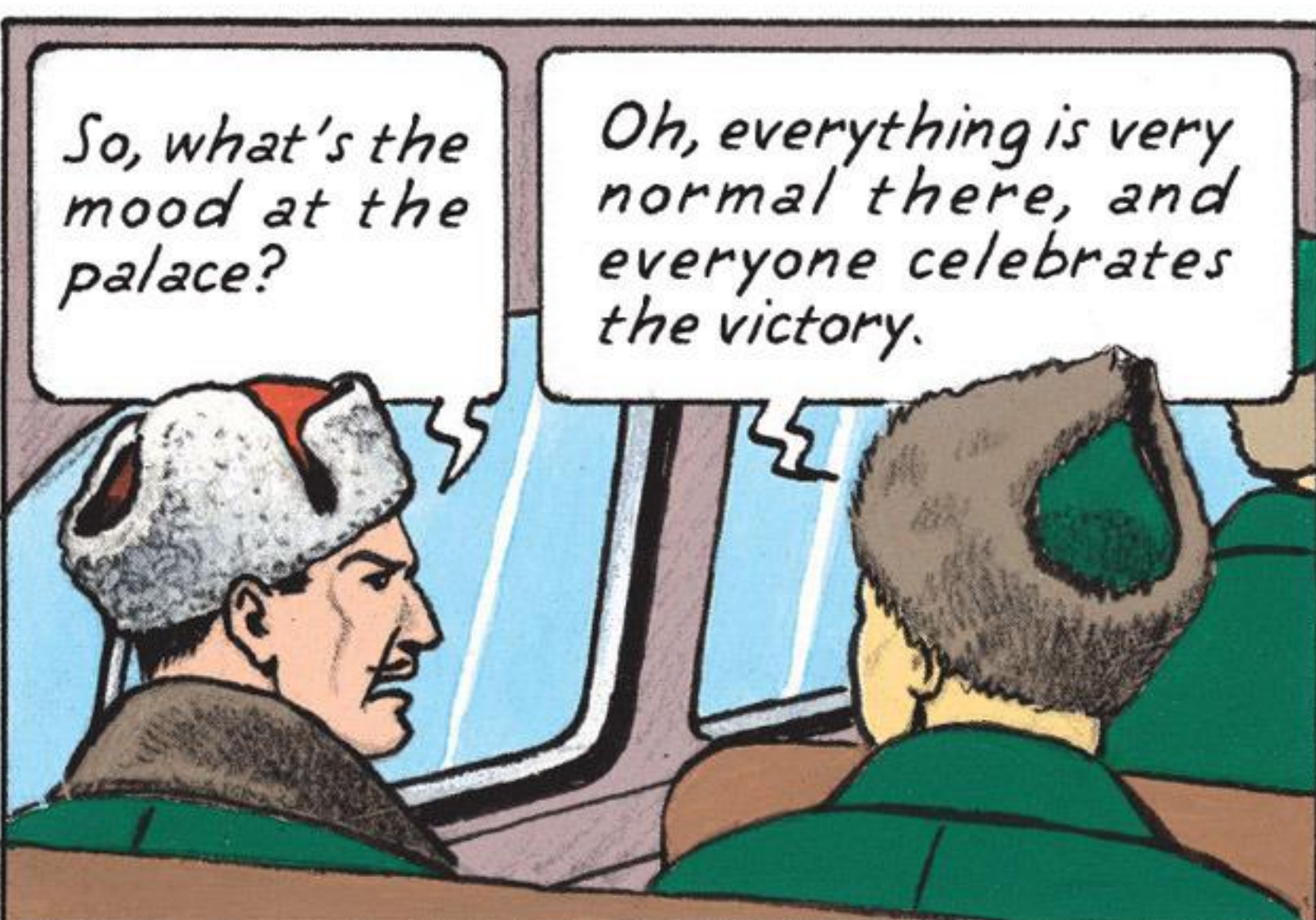


It's nothing, just a traffic jam.



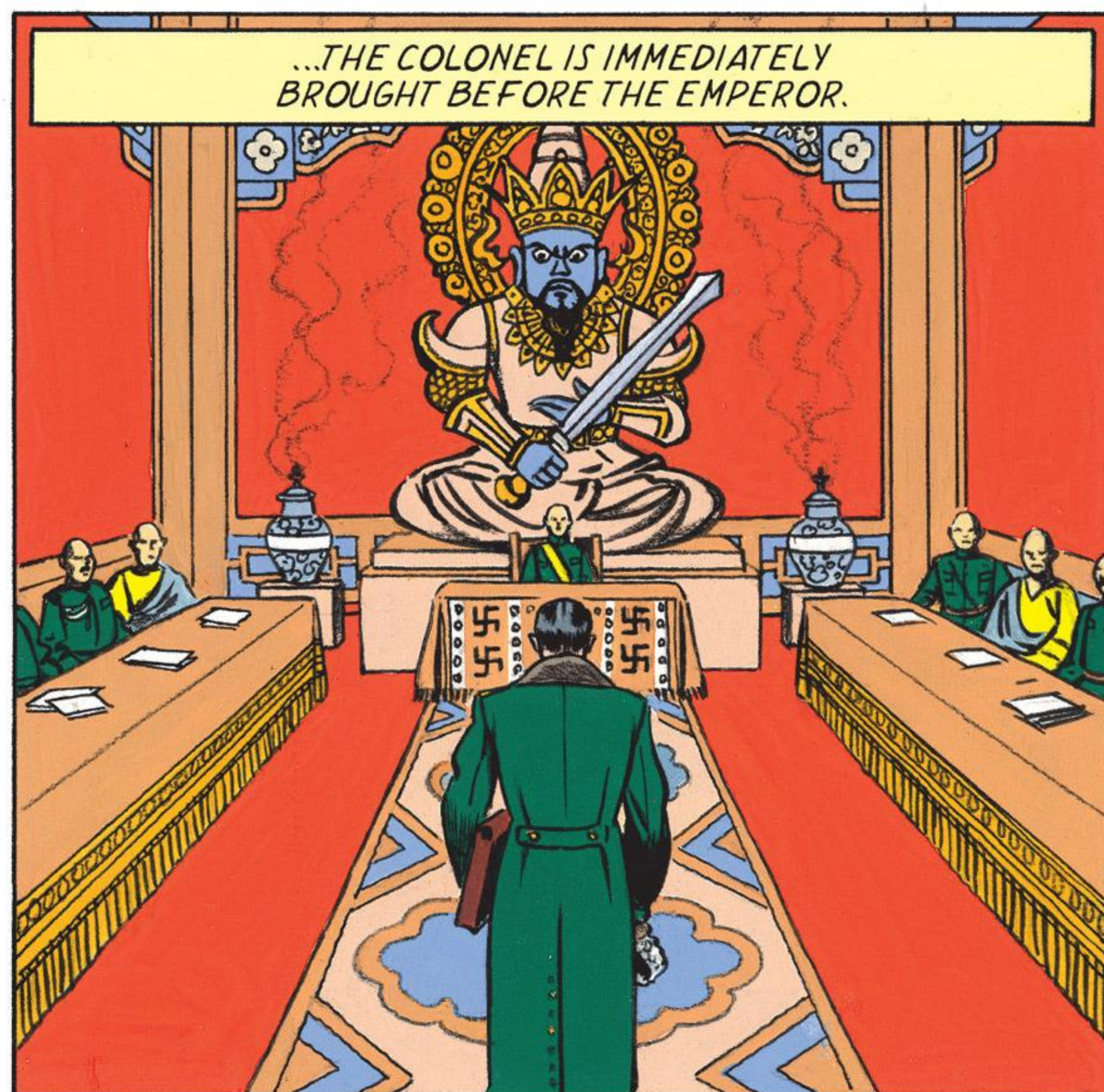
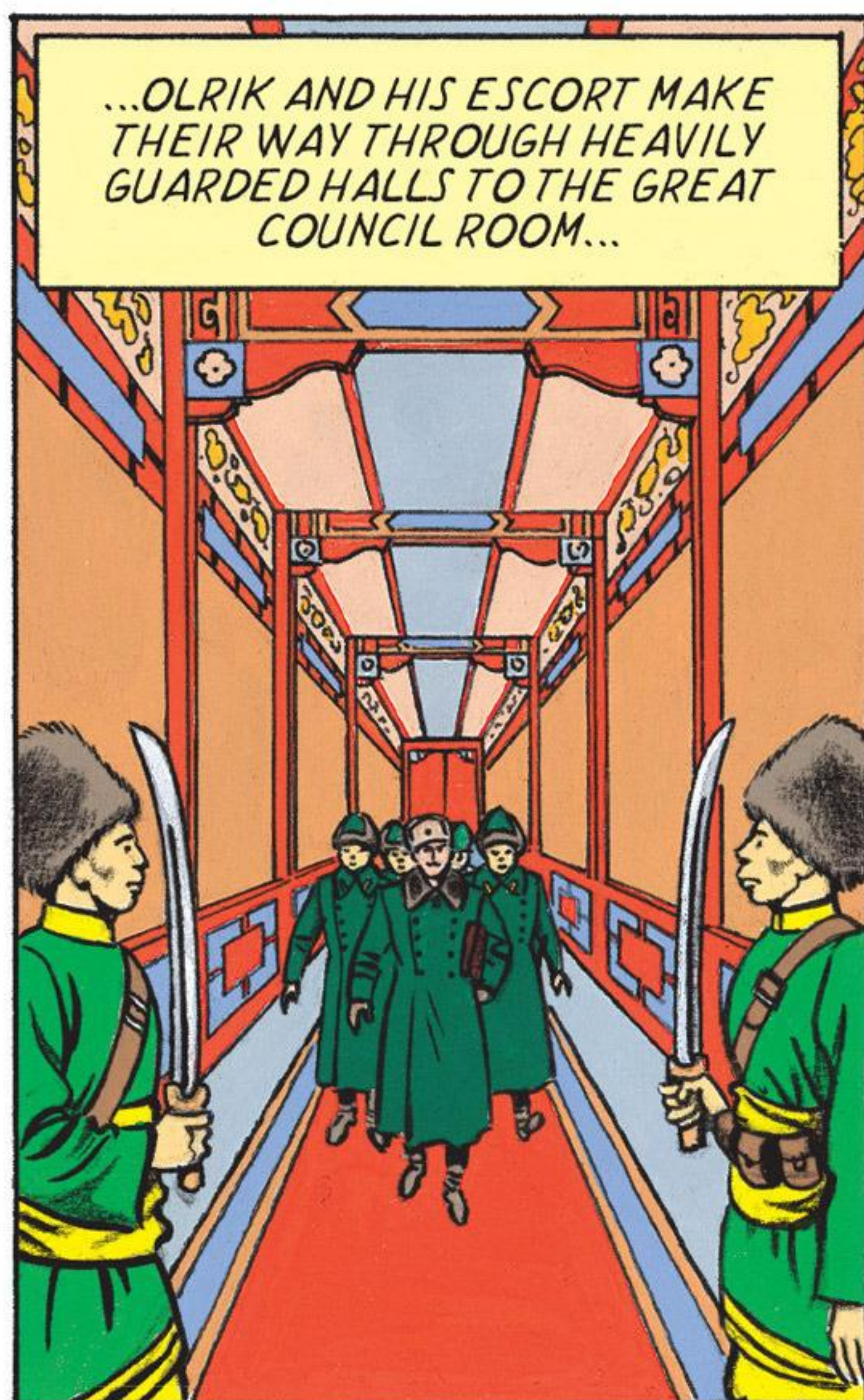
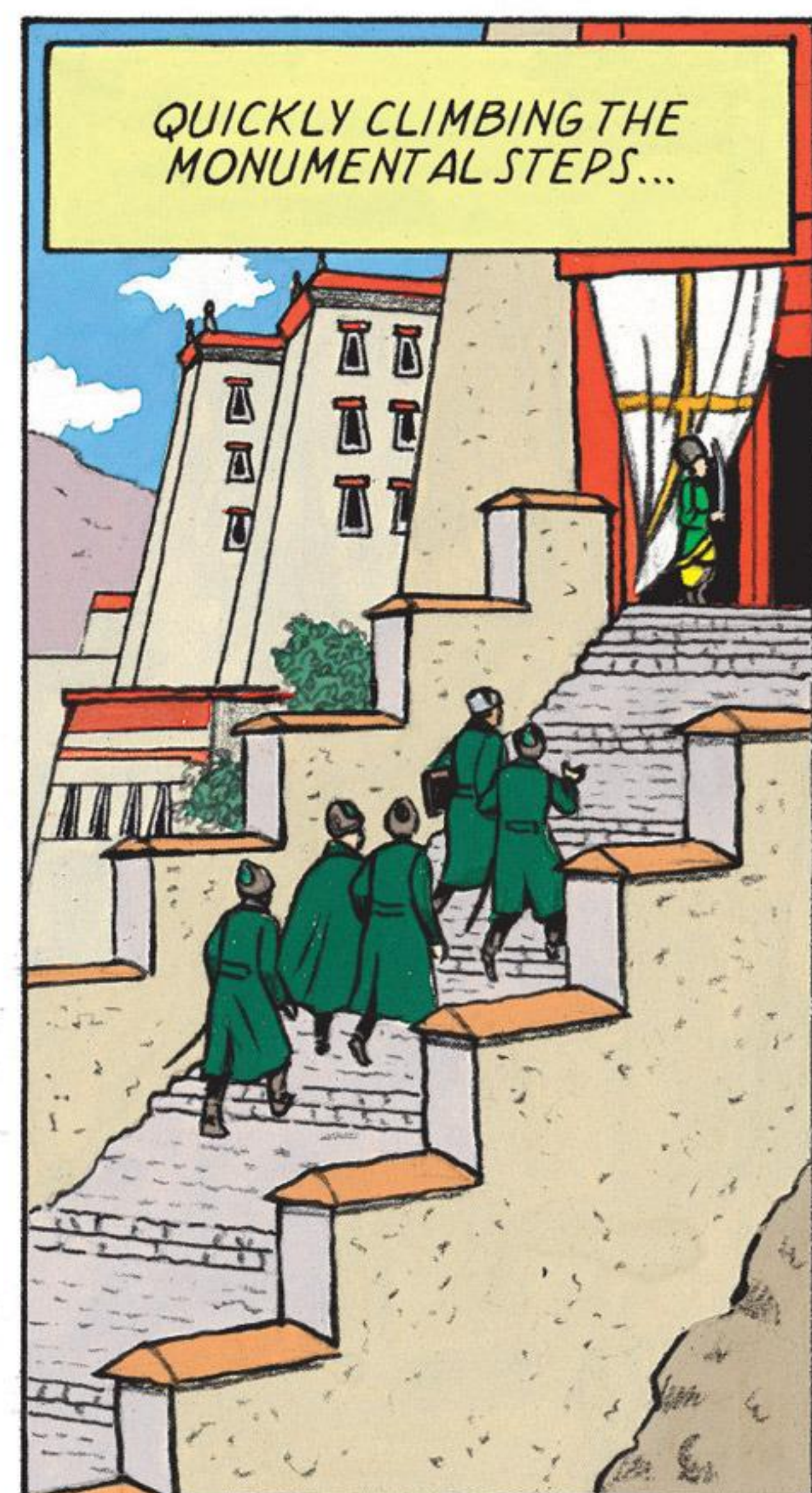
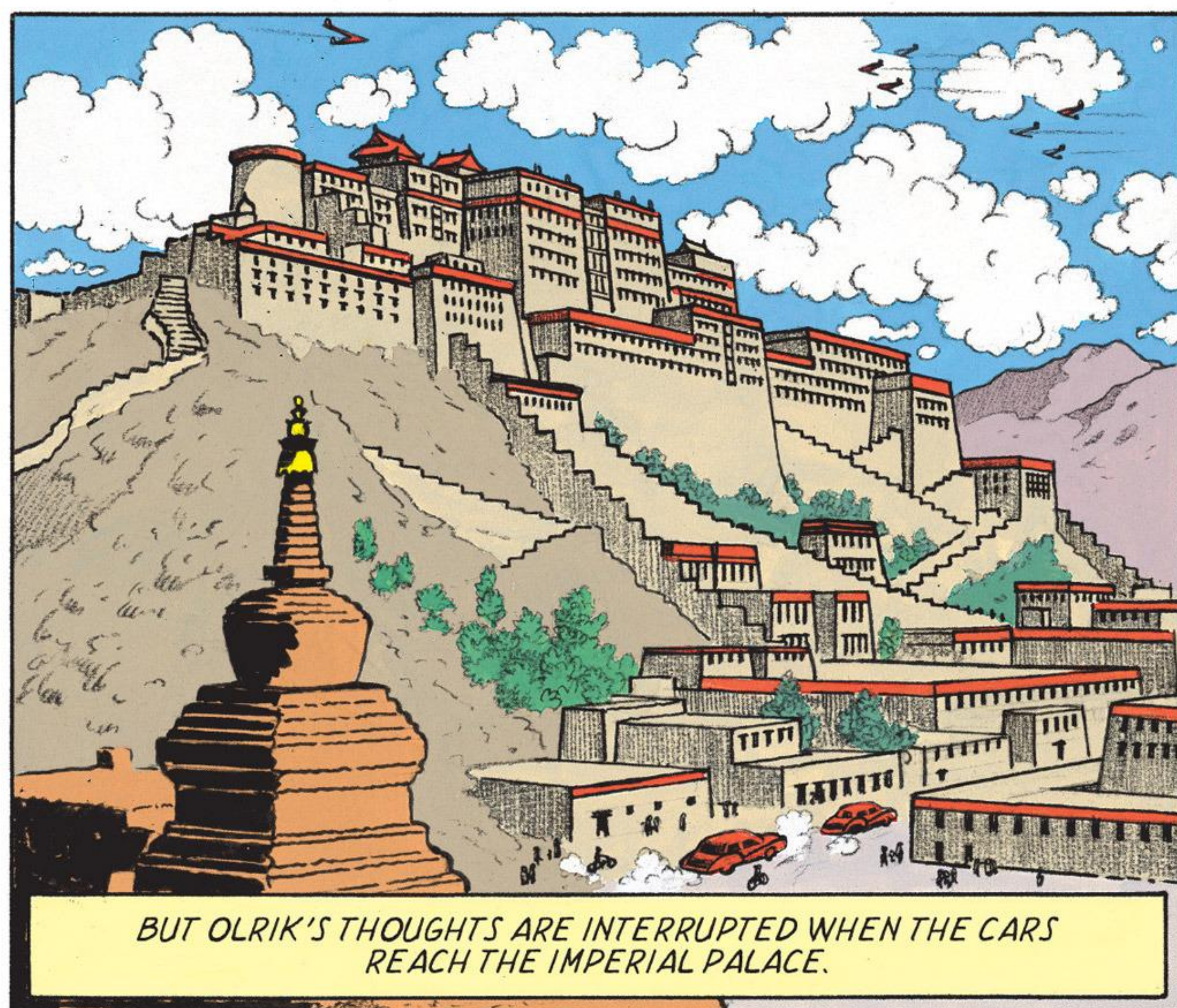
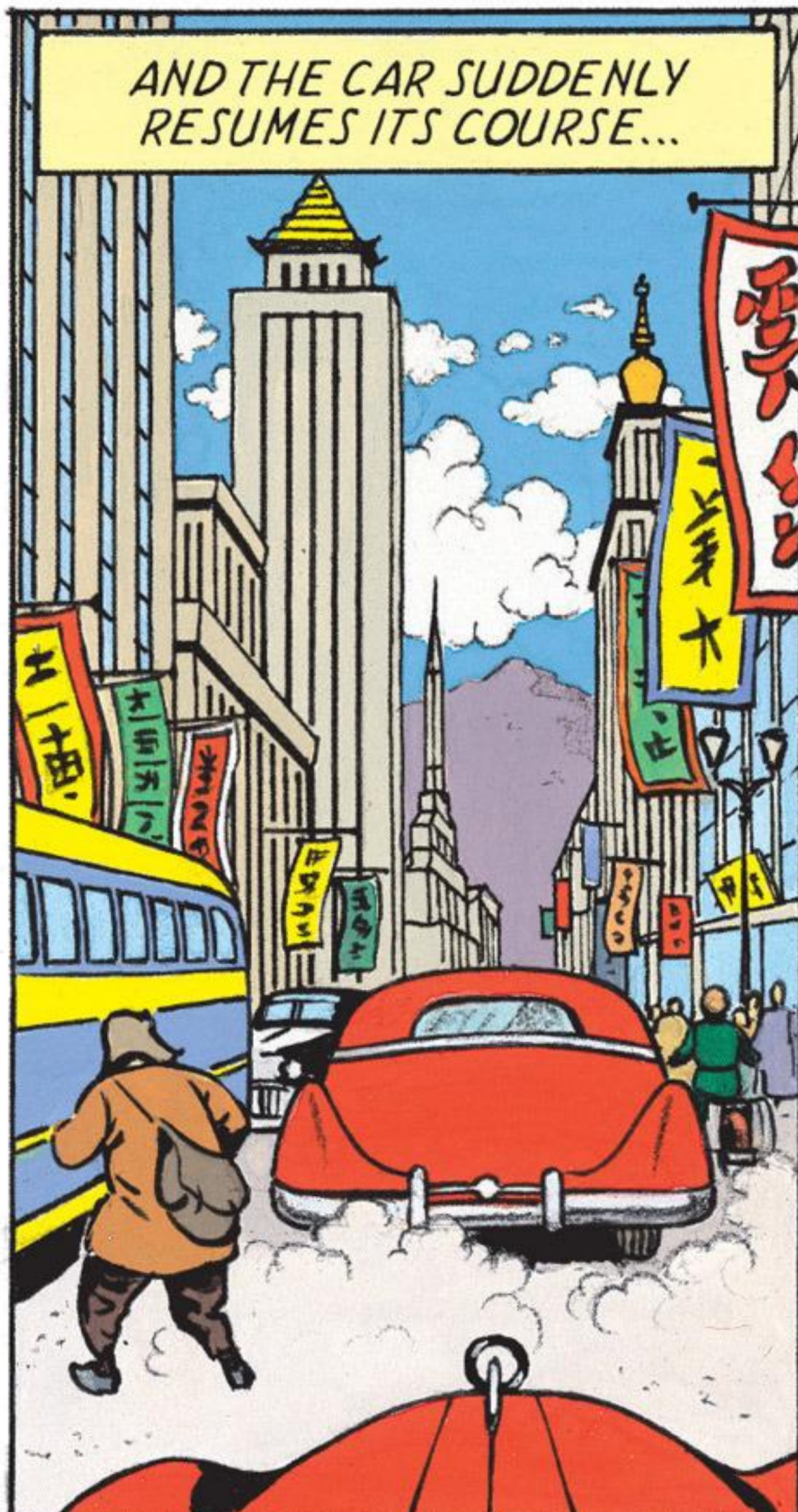
So, what's the mood at the palace?

Oh, everything is very normal there, and everyone celebrates the victory.

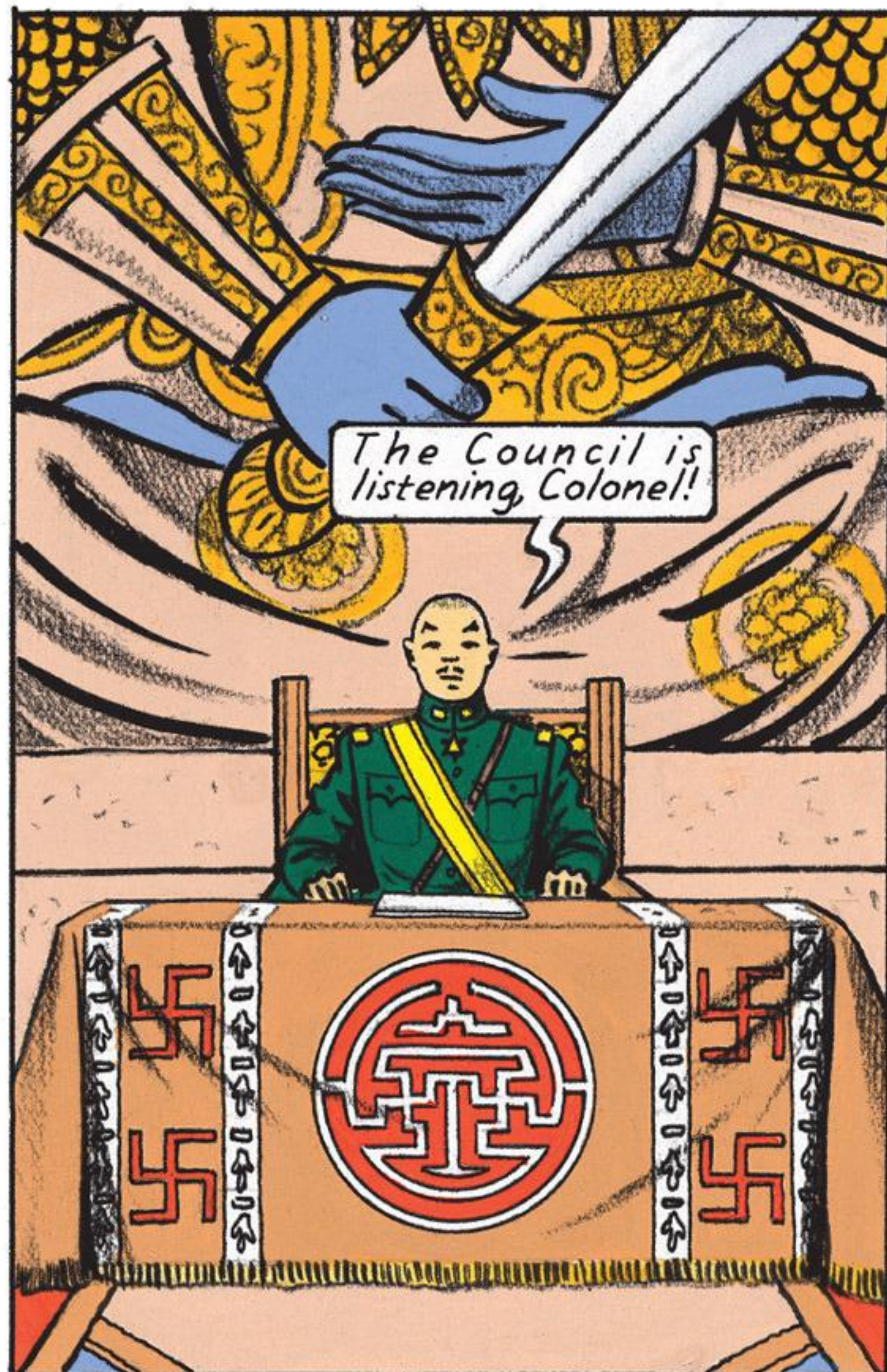


A little flag, Lord Officer? Just one coin!





*A BUDDHIST DHARMA PROTECTOR (LITERALLY 'THE TERMINATOR OF DEATH')



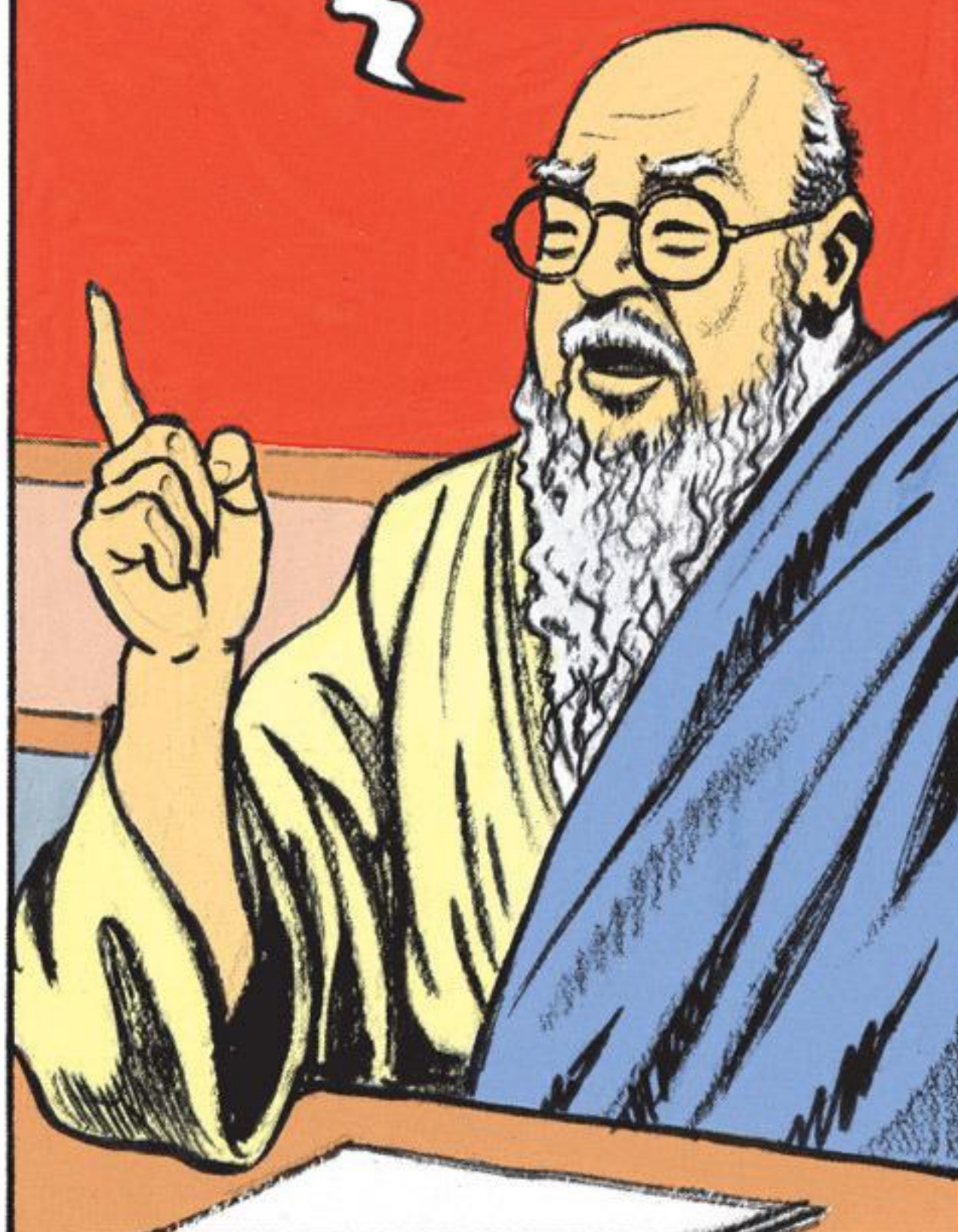
First allow me, Sire, and you, gentlemen, to report on the pacification and mopping up of conquered territories. In short, I believe I can state that, aside from a few sporadic cases of rebellion, all organised resistance has virtually ceased. We have captured or killed its leaders. As for the Blake and Mortimer case that was specially entrusted to me, it is nearing resolution. While our enemies' destruction of the Scafell plant was a regrettable loss for us, we have corroborating reports that Blake almost certainly perished in the quicksands that abound in the area where Mortimer was captured. As for the latter, I am convinced that the secret he holds will soon be ours...



Me, for example!... You dare to call 'sporadic cases of rebellion' the destruction of the great viaduct of Wloclawek, the massacre of the Mers El Kébir garrison and the brutal murder of Governor Walter, our most precious asset in the New World?



Not to mention the extremely mysterious kidnappings of scientists and nuclear physics and aeronautics specialists from the camps where we imprisoned them. And I'm not even speaking of the propaganda, clandestine pamphlets, and so on...



Must I tell you, Colonel, that I am especially displeased with the results you've obtained in the Blake and Mortimer case? For a start, you bring me no proof of Blake's death. As for the professor, will you explain to me why you have yet to make him talk? You do not seem in much of a hurry. That secret is important. We know that. Am I to believe that you have some personal reasons for delaying the prisoner's confession?



Sire!!! I will admit that there is still some doubt about Blake. But as for Mortimer, he has already gone through four very 'special' interrogations – without cracking. During the fifth, the doctor noticed a serious weakness in his heart and opposed any new procedure, as it would have had lethal consequences. Which would have deprived us of our only source of information...



Well, my dear colonel, his physical impairment certainly didn't stop him from trying to escape, did it?



It is clear that in all of this you have failed to be sufficiently firm. You are a Westerner, Olrik, and consequently a little oversensitive. Mortimer is deceiving you. He holds the secret of the lost plans... He must talk! I will give you one last chance. If you fail – which would be unfortunate for you – I will send you one of our specialists in 'spontaneous confessions'. I guarantee he will obtain results!



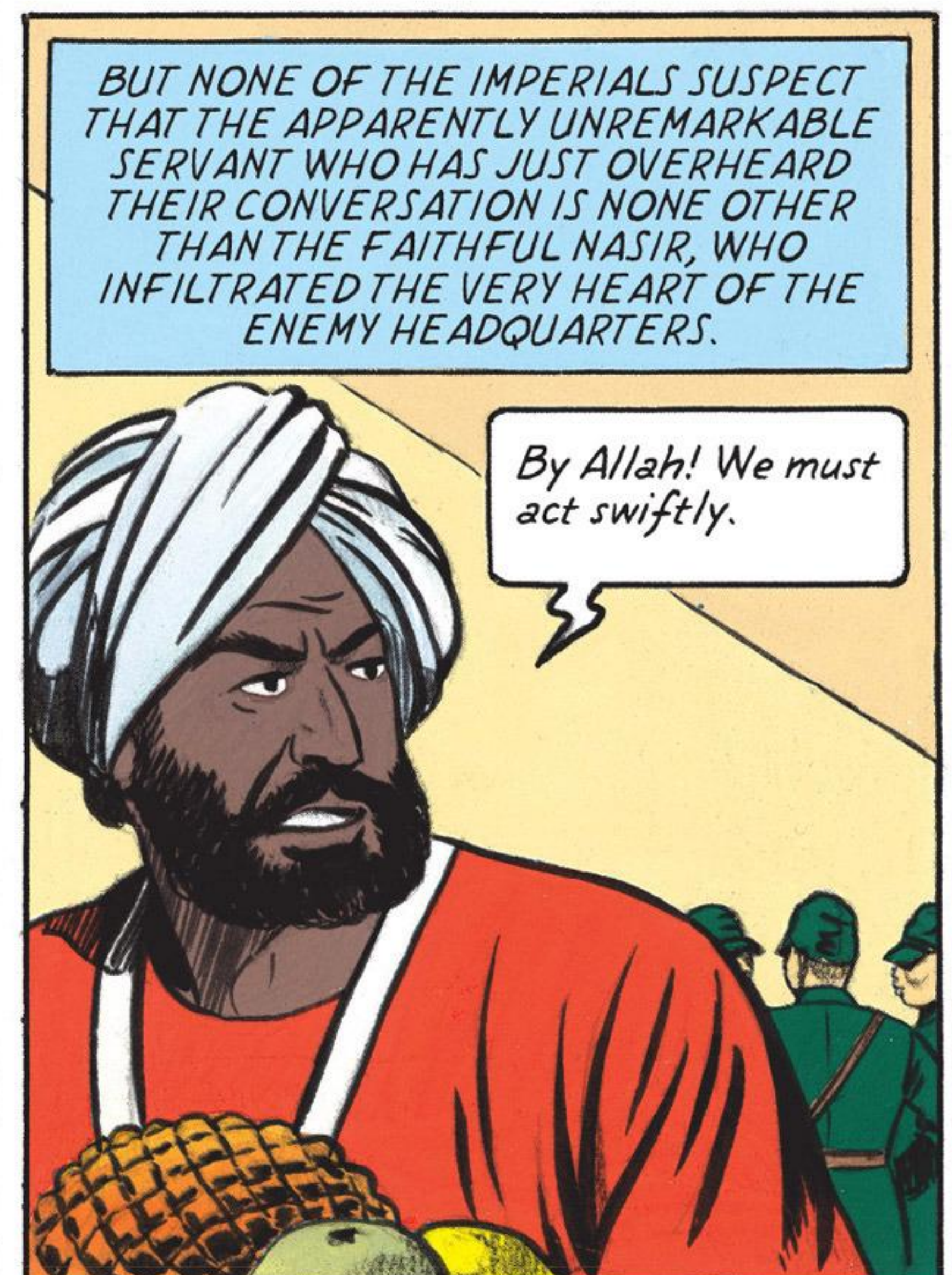
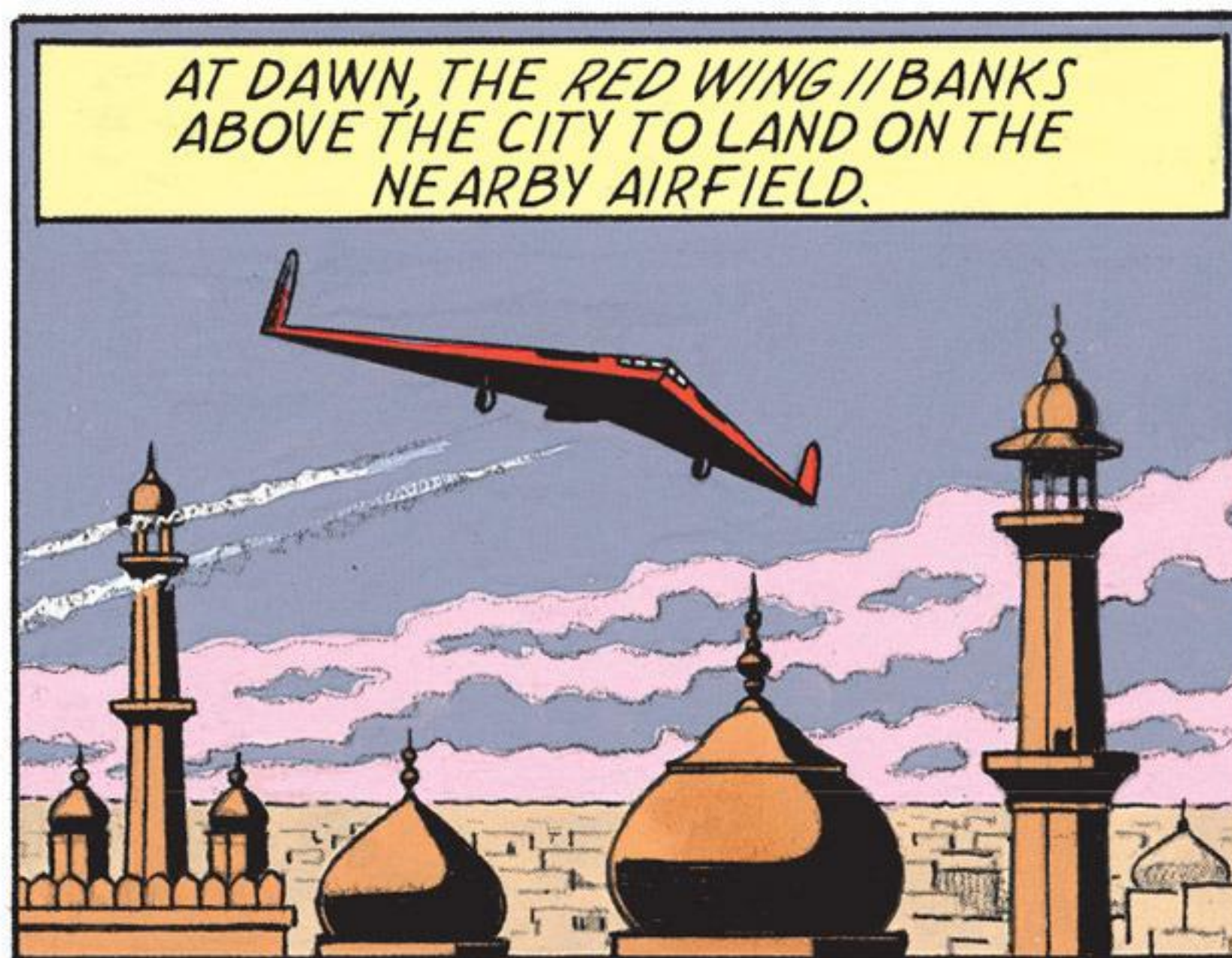
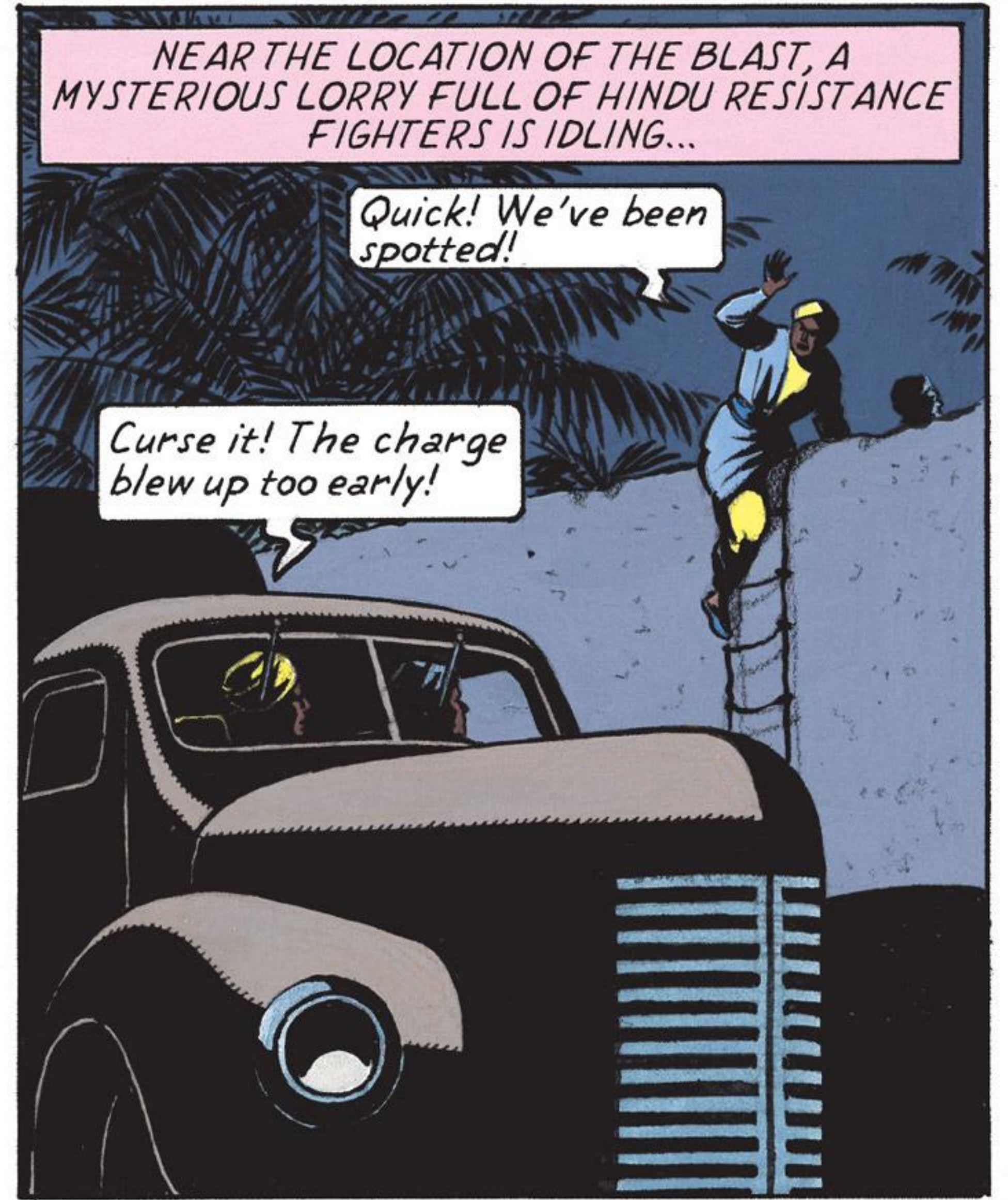
Go, now!... I give you two days to succeed.

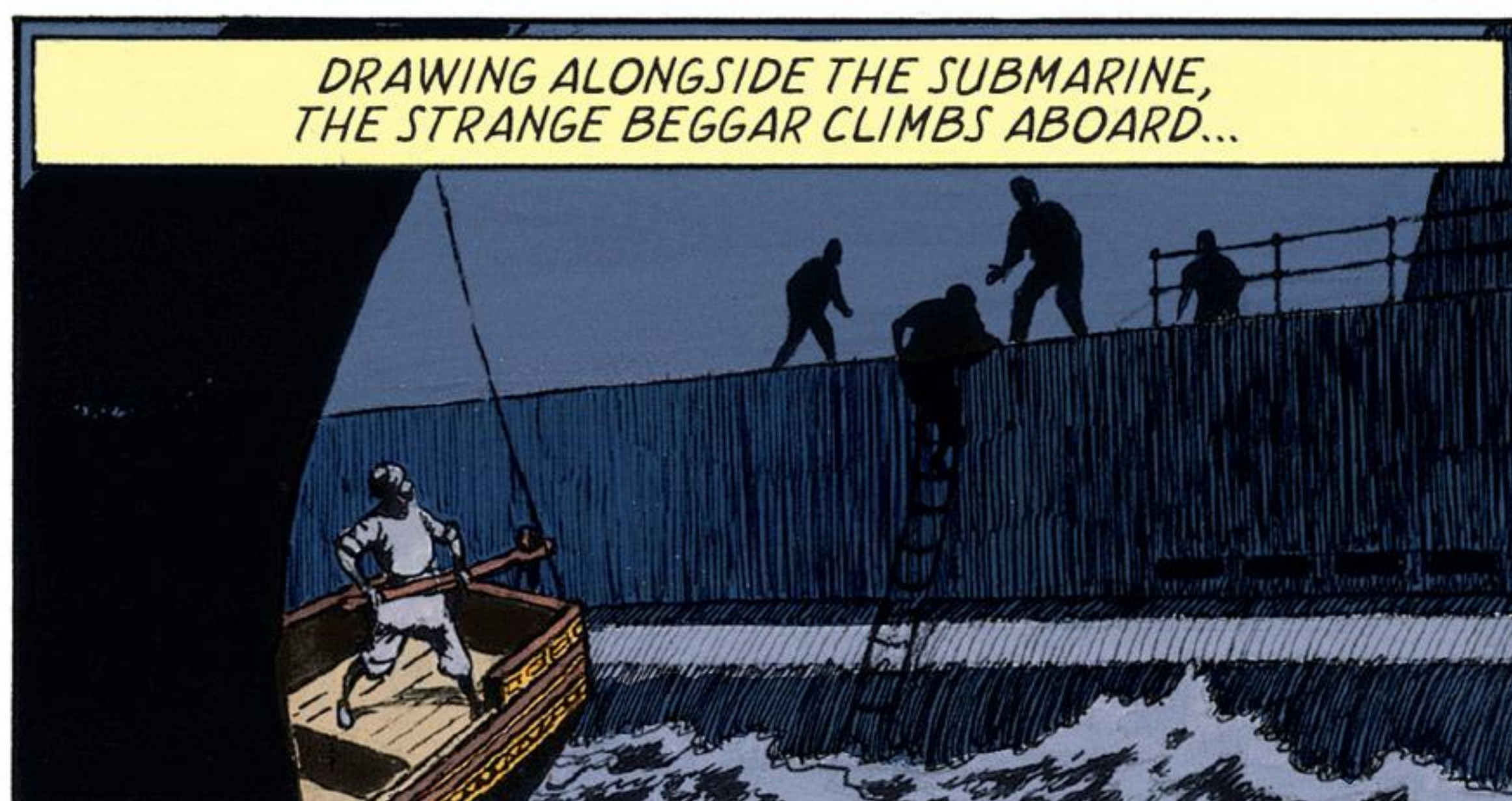
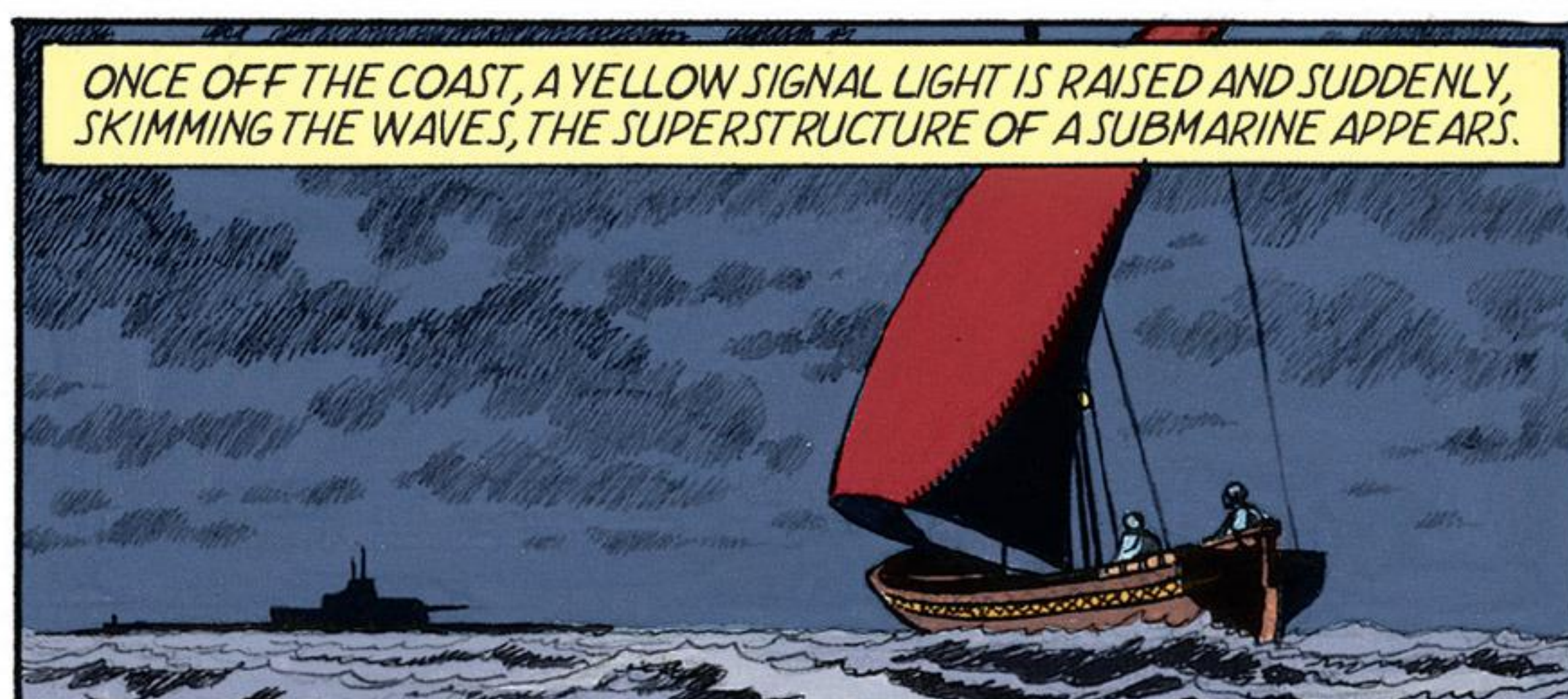
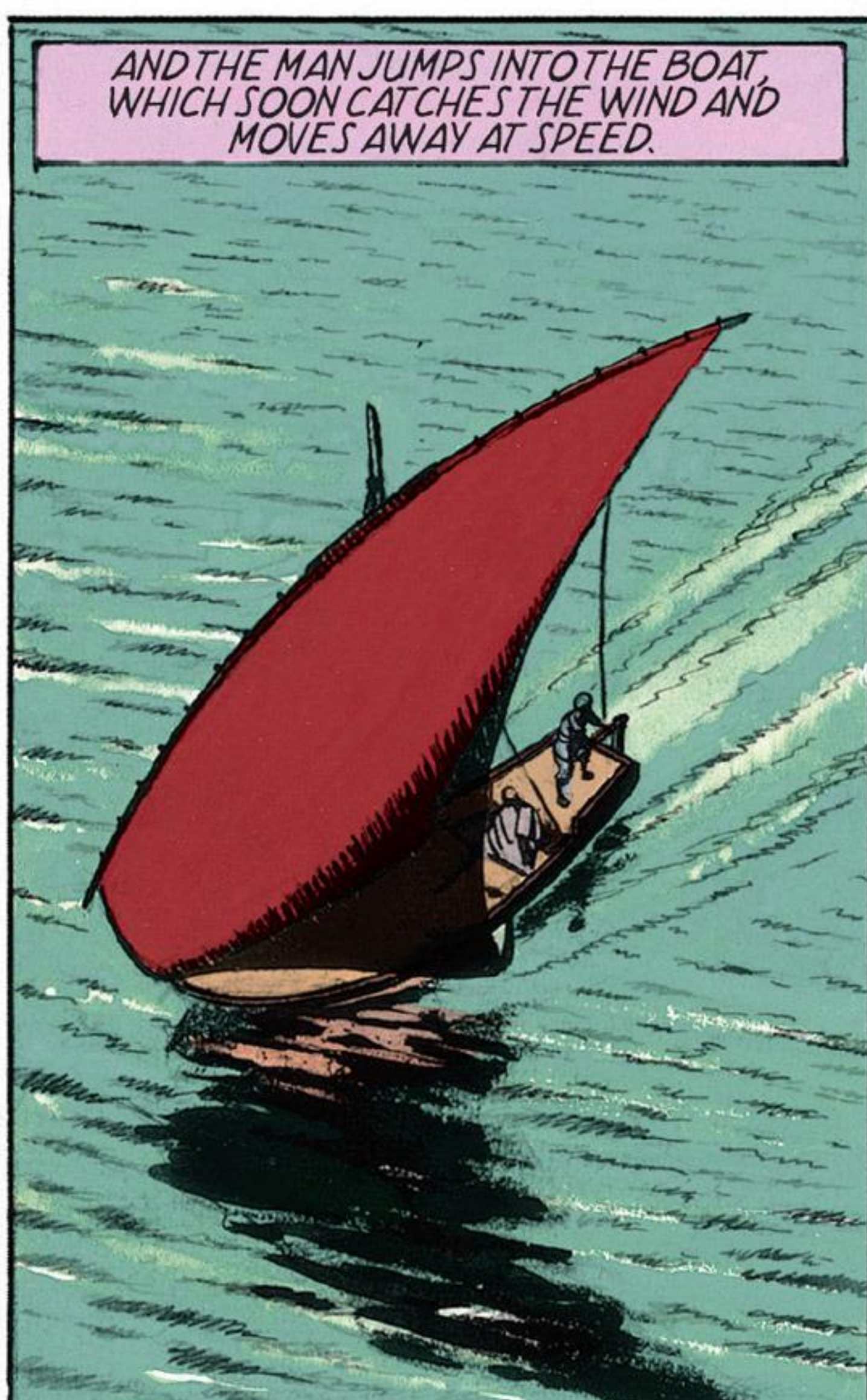
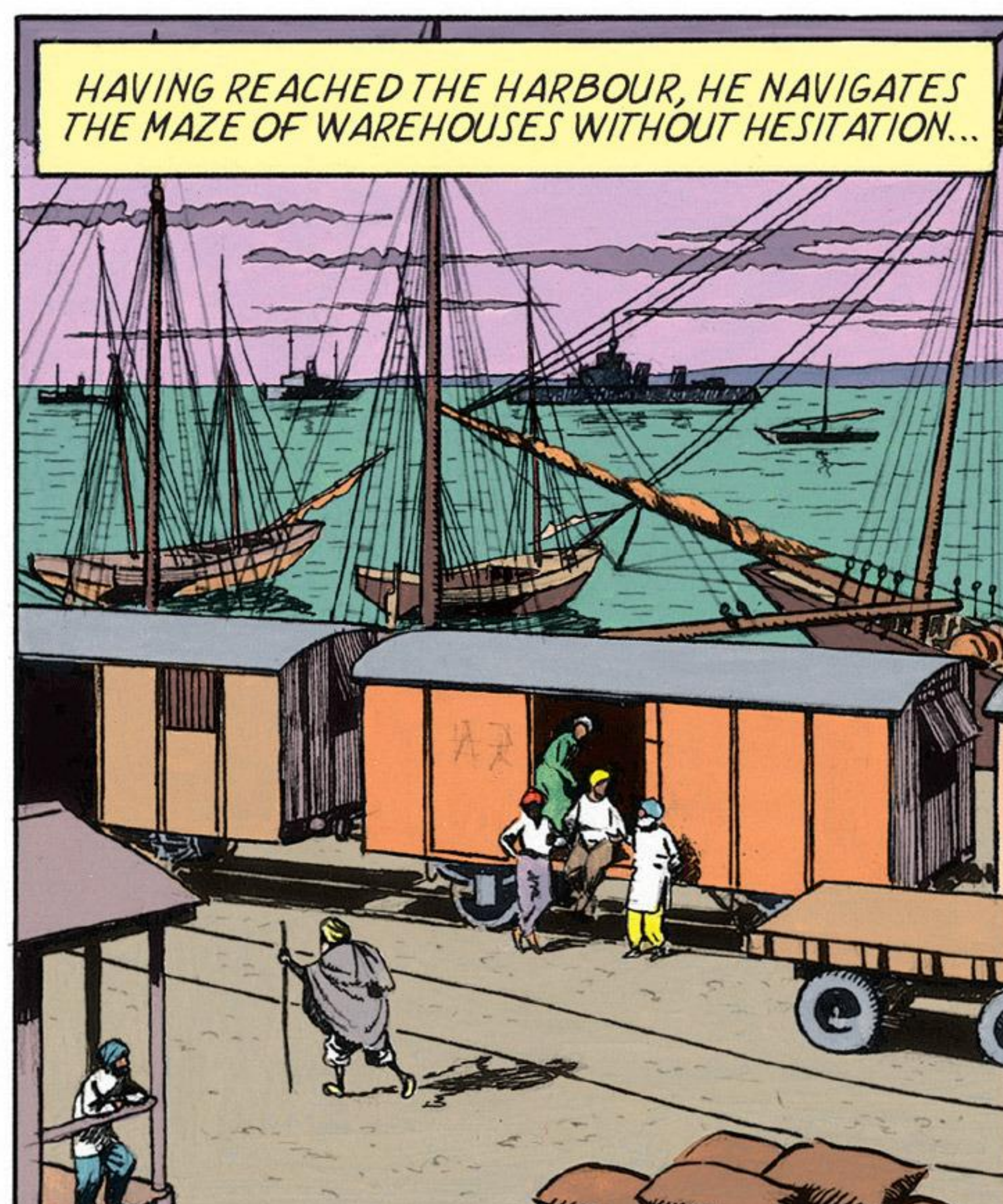
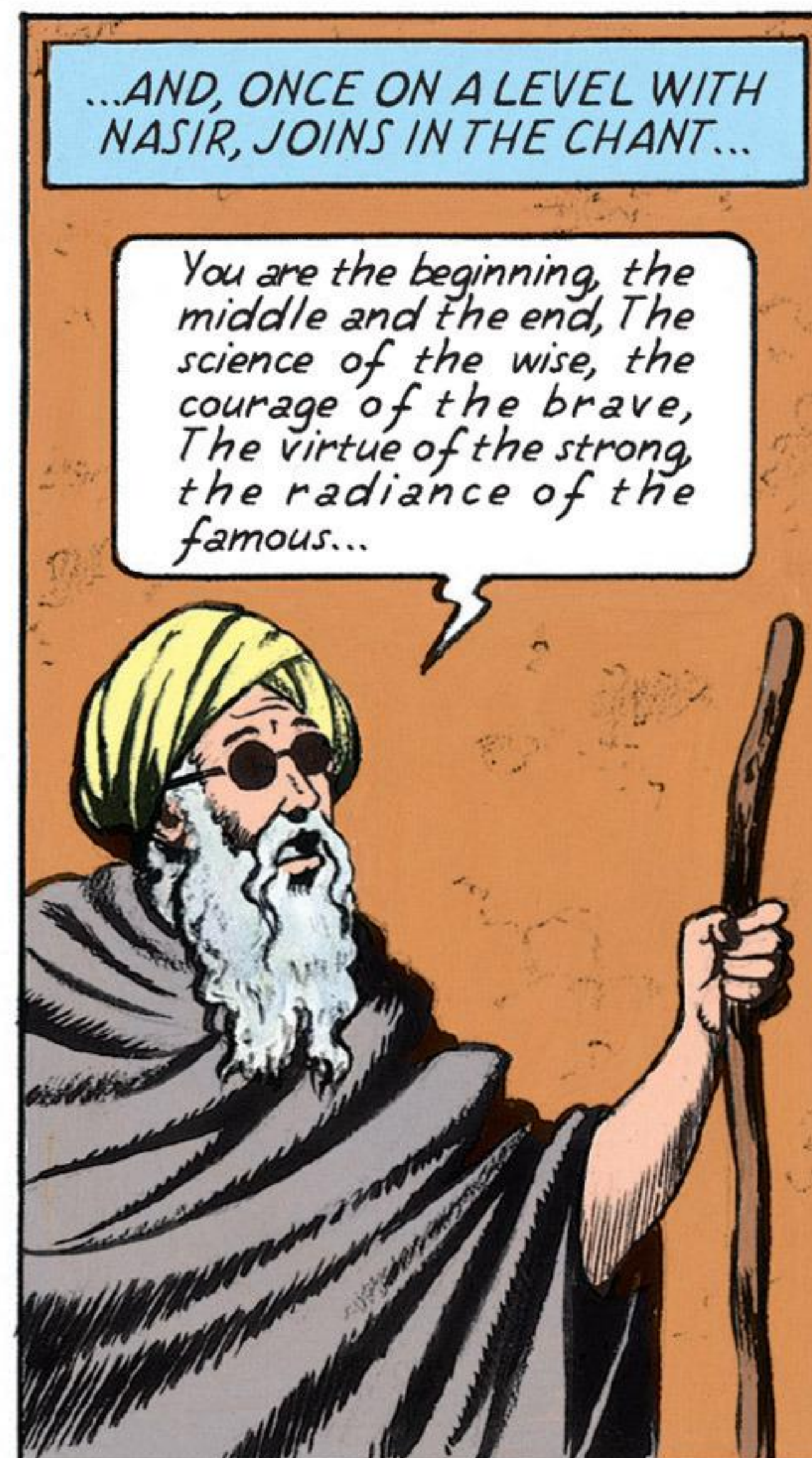
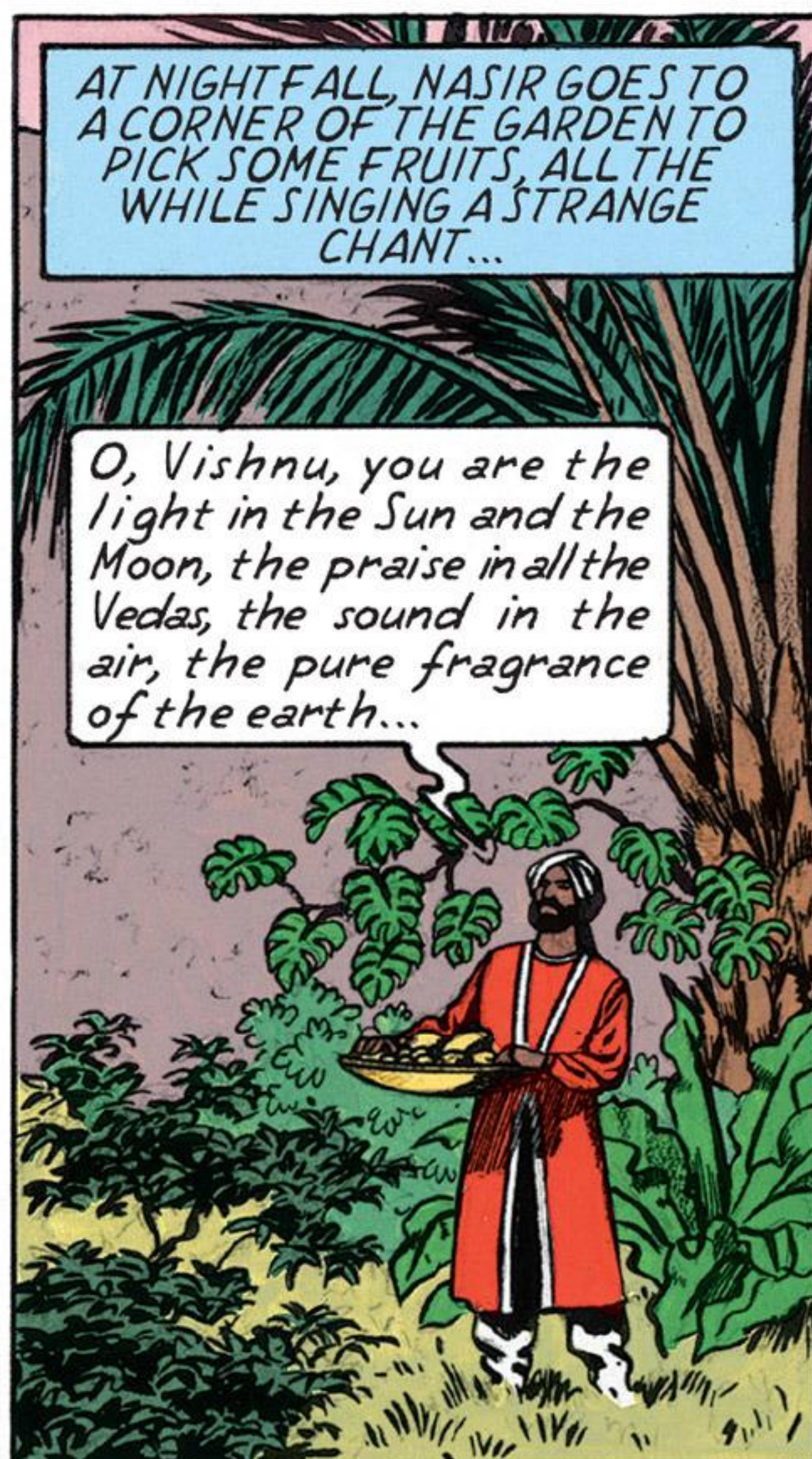


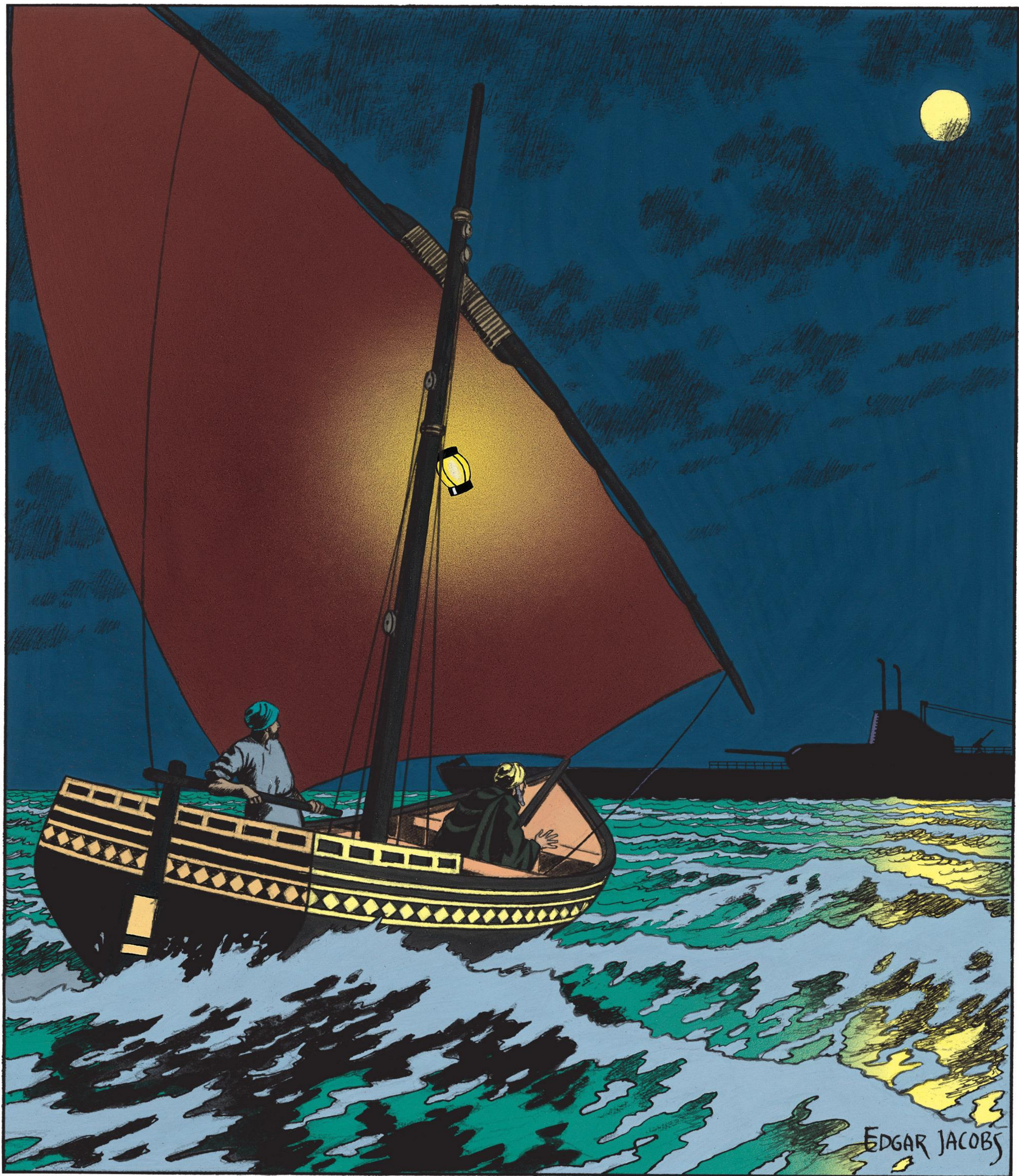
AFTER THAT HARSH REPRIMAND, A FURIOUS OLRİK LEAVES THE COUNCIL ROOM.

You will pay for this, my masters!...

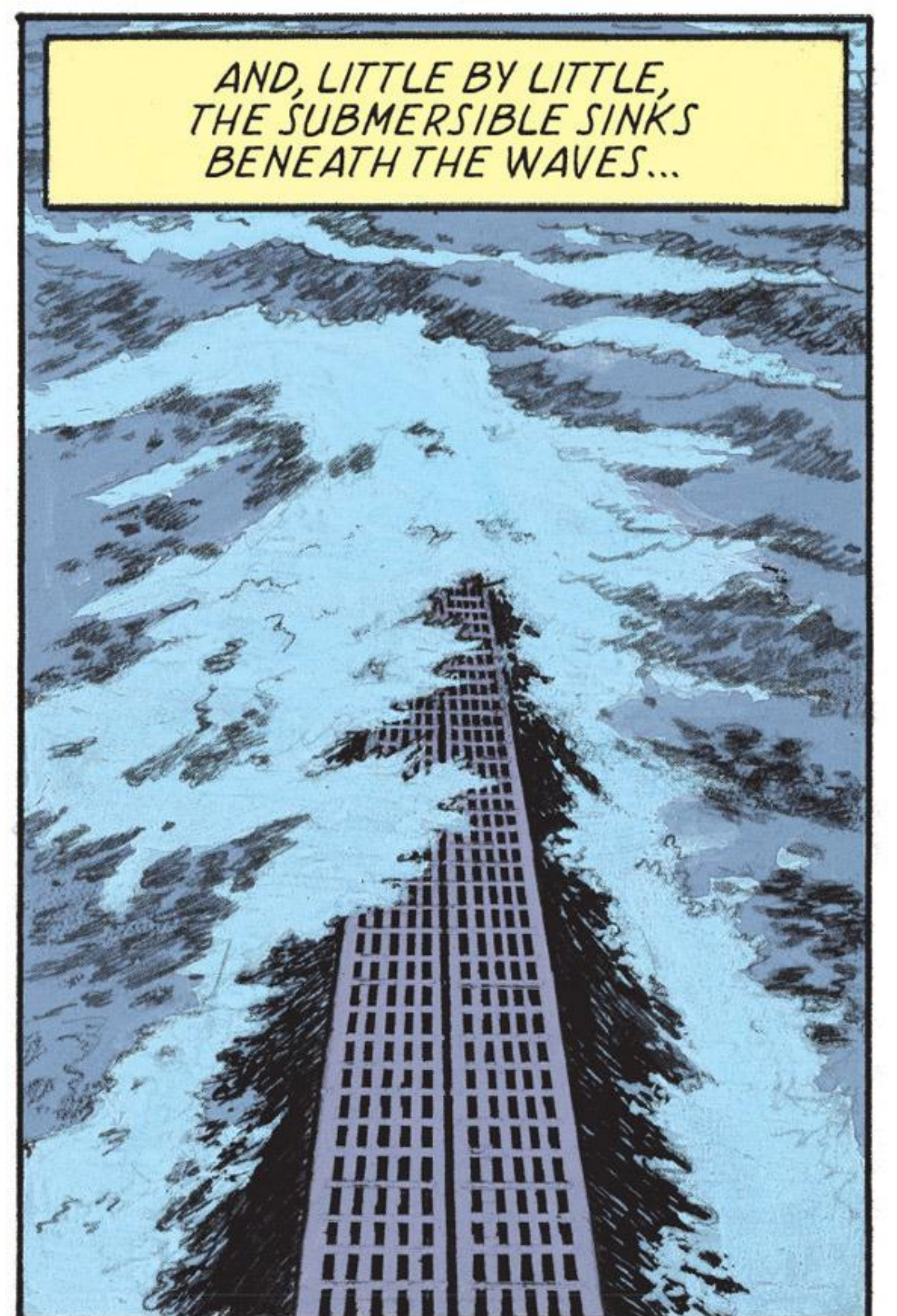
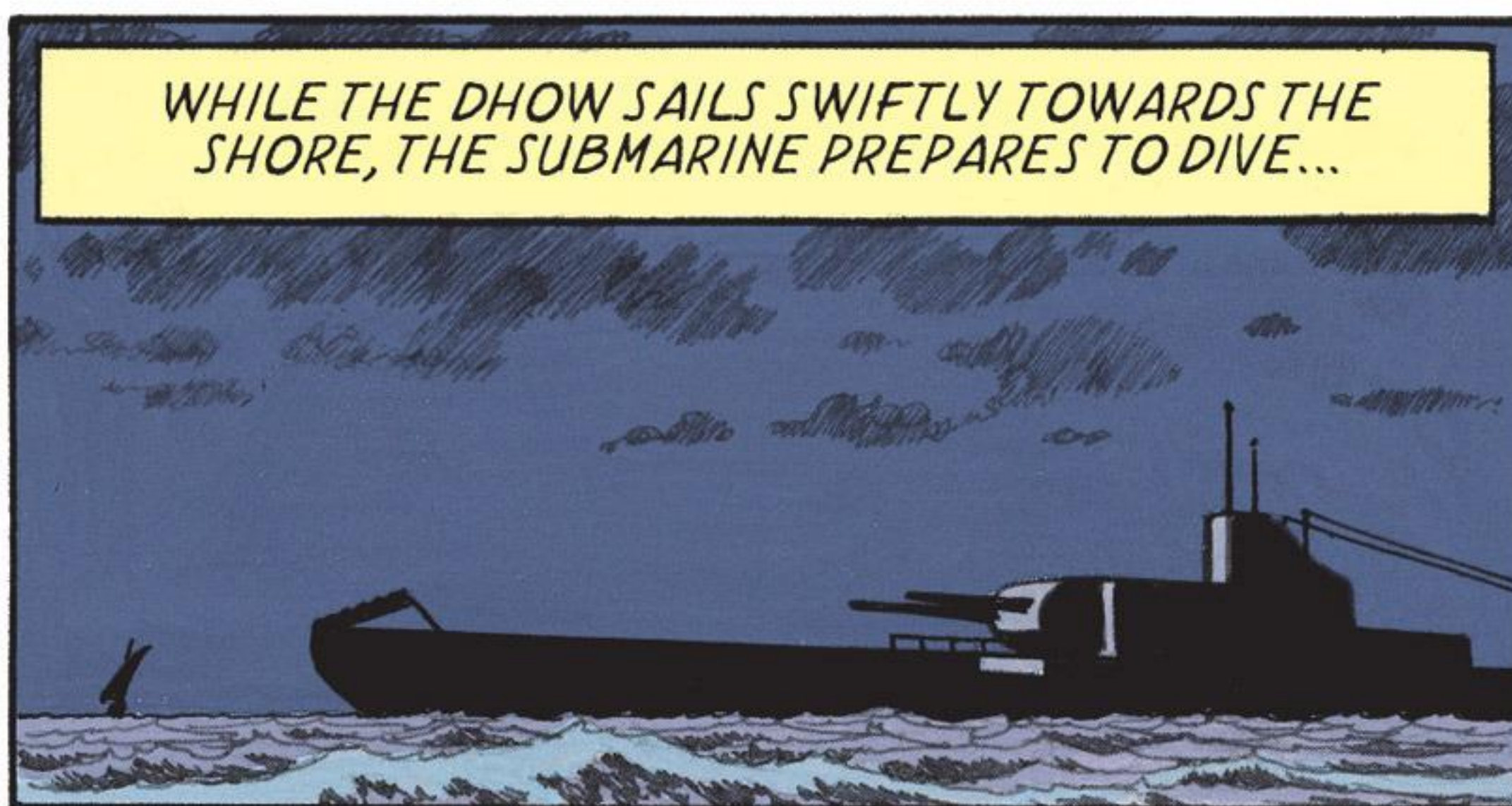
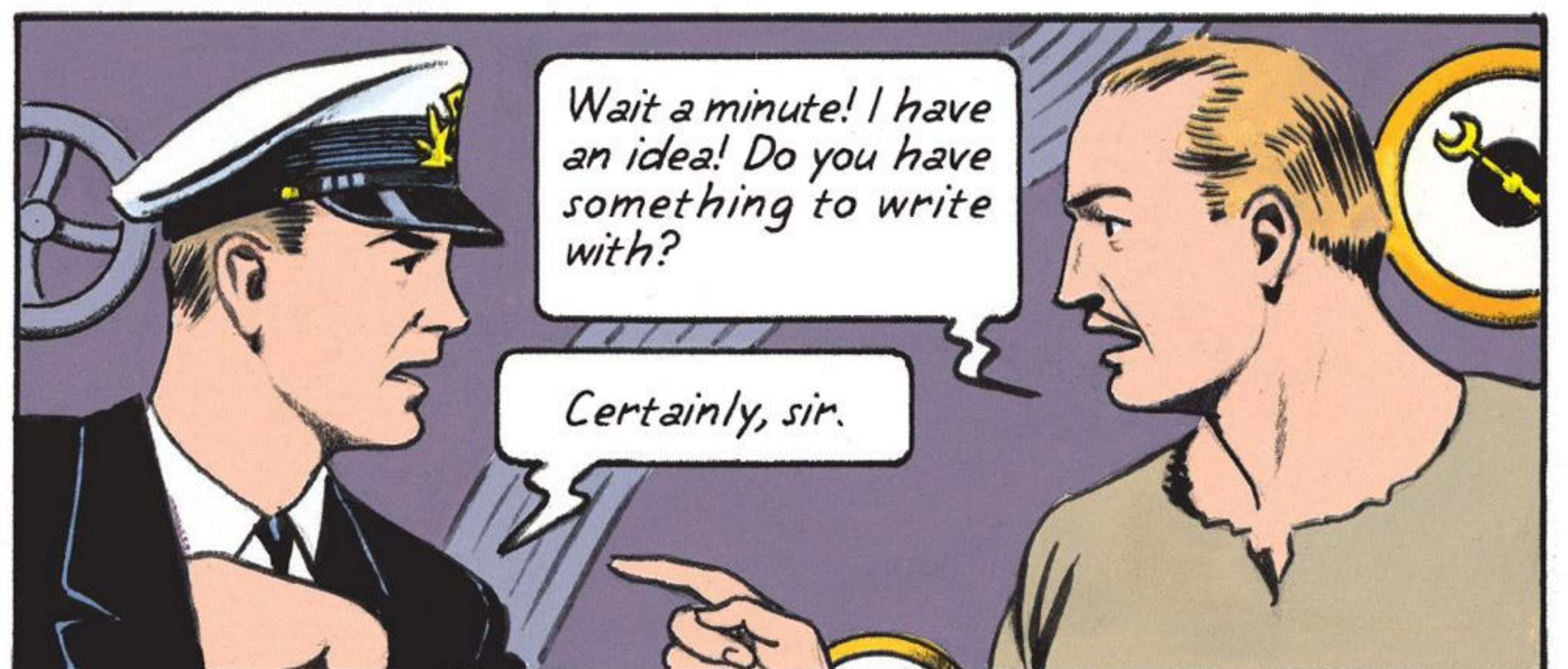
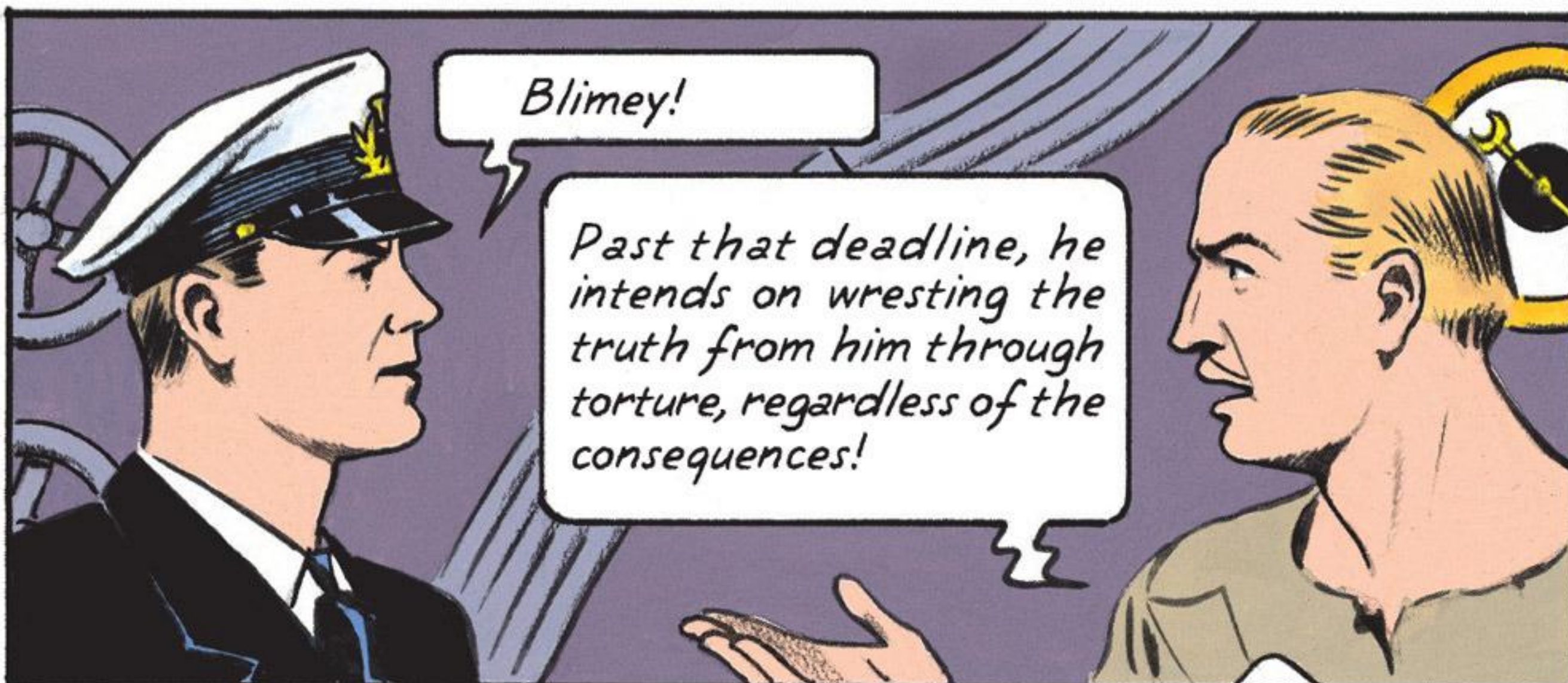
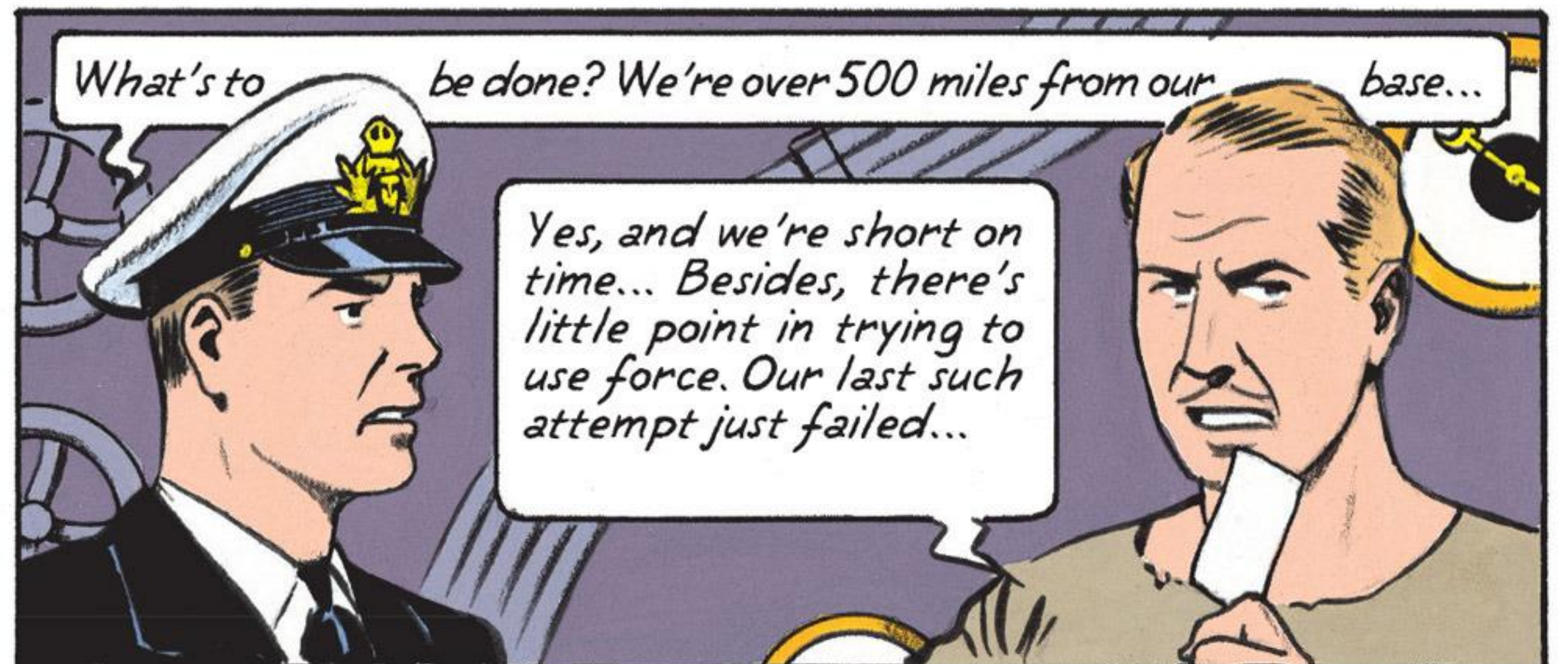
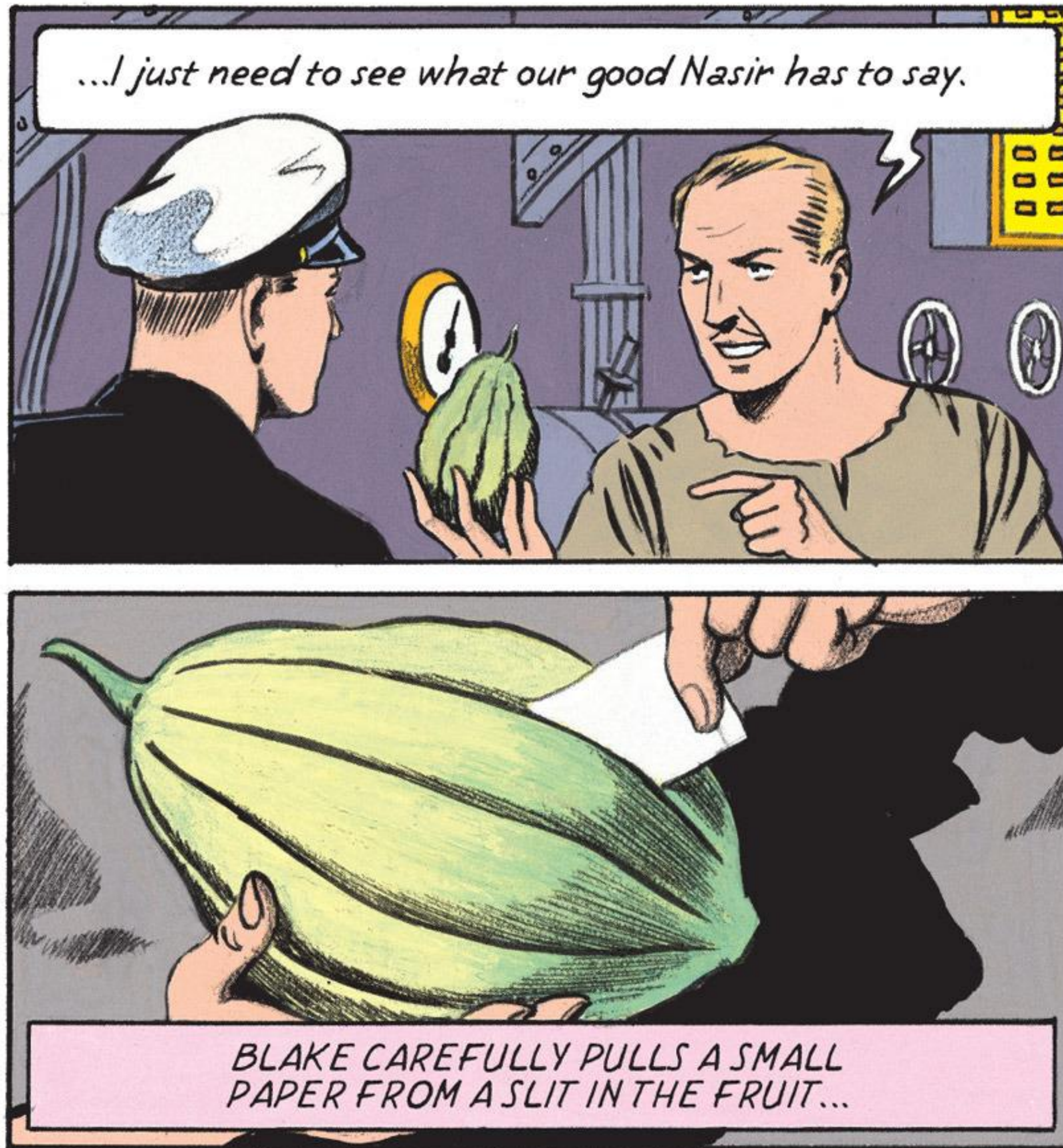


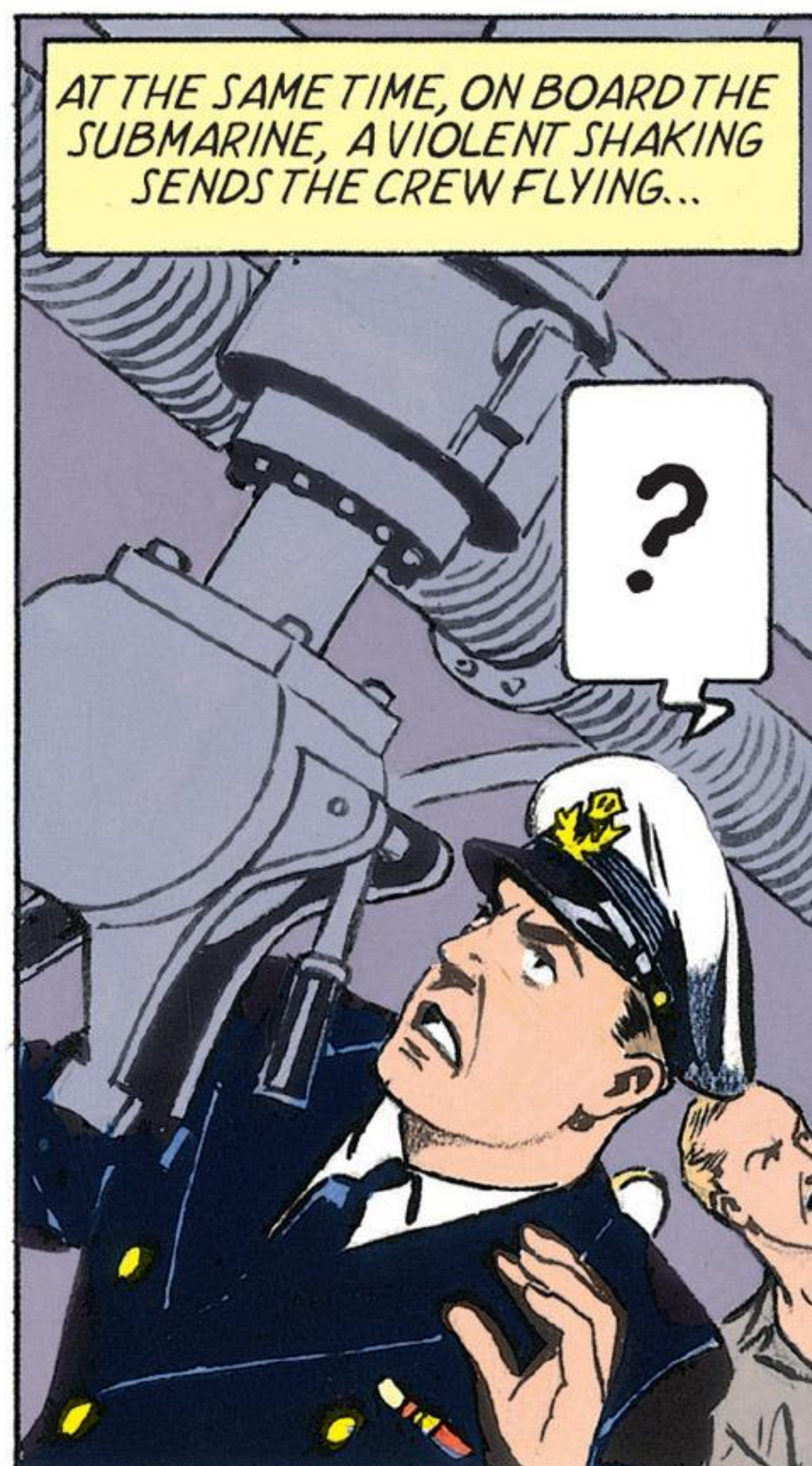
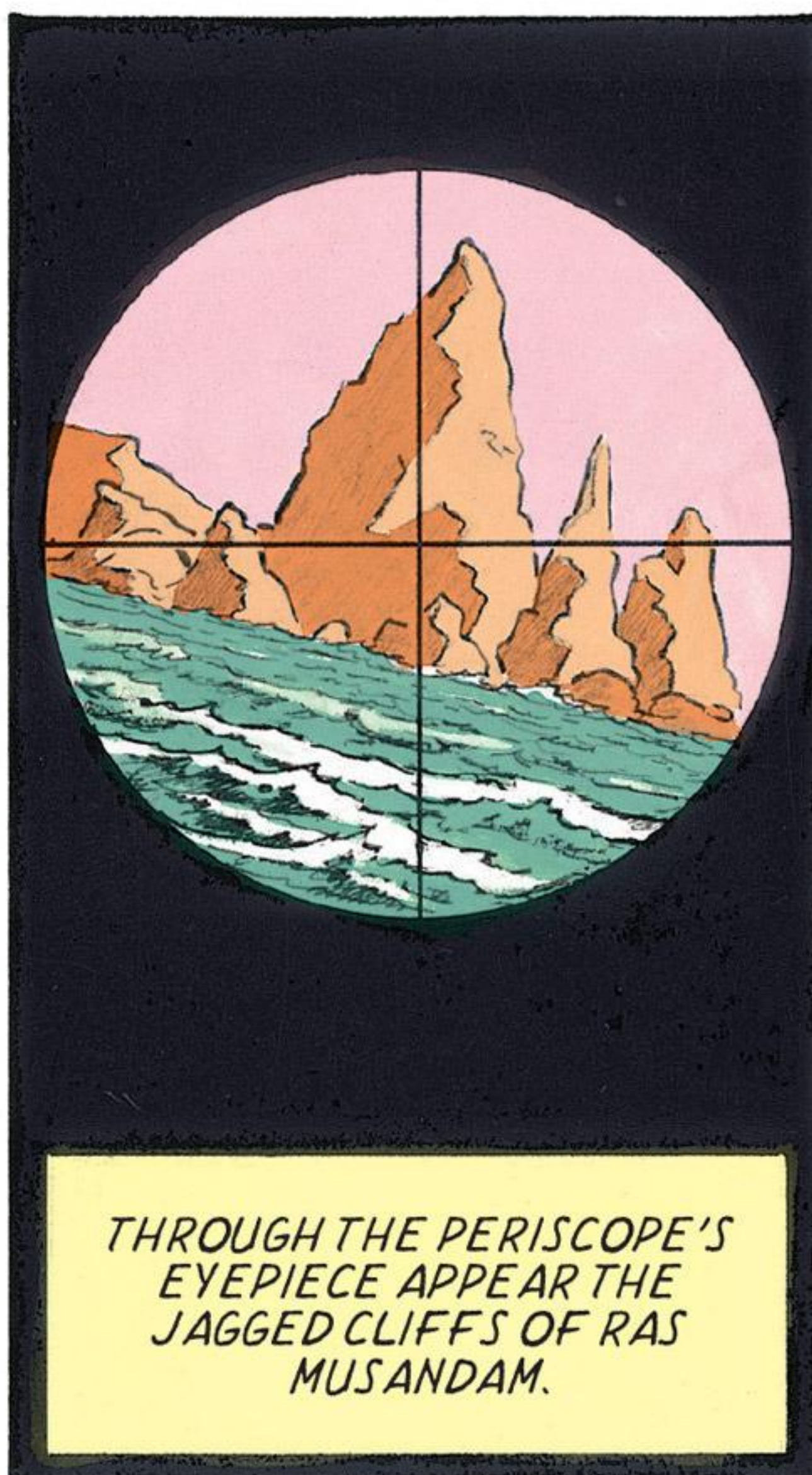
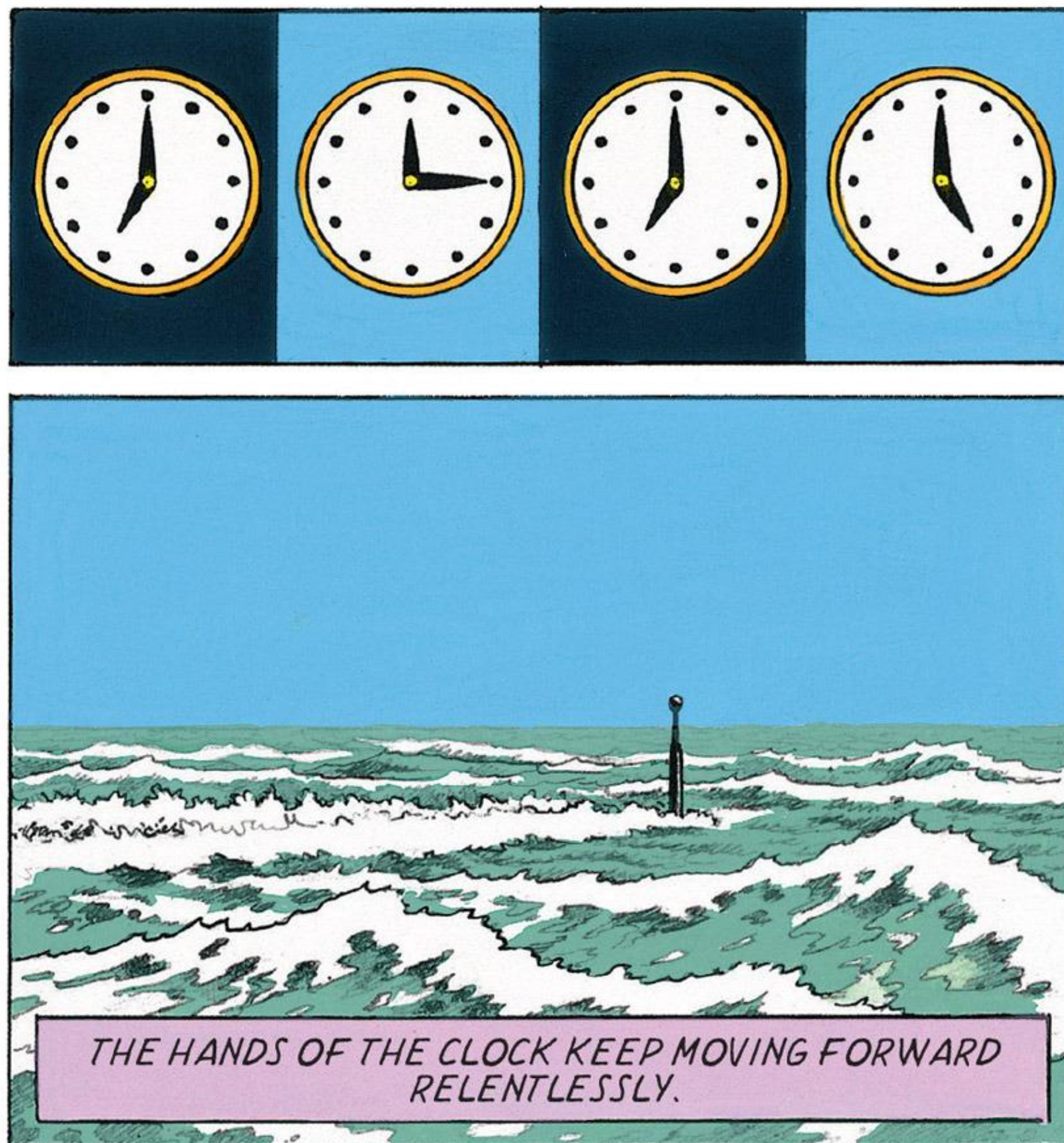
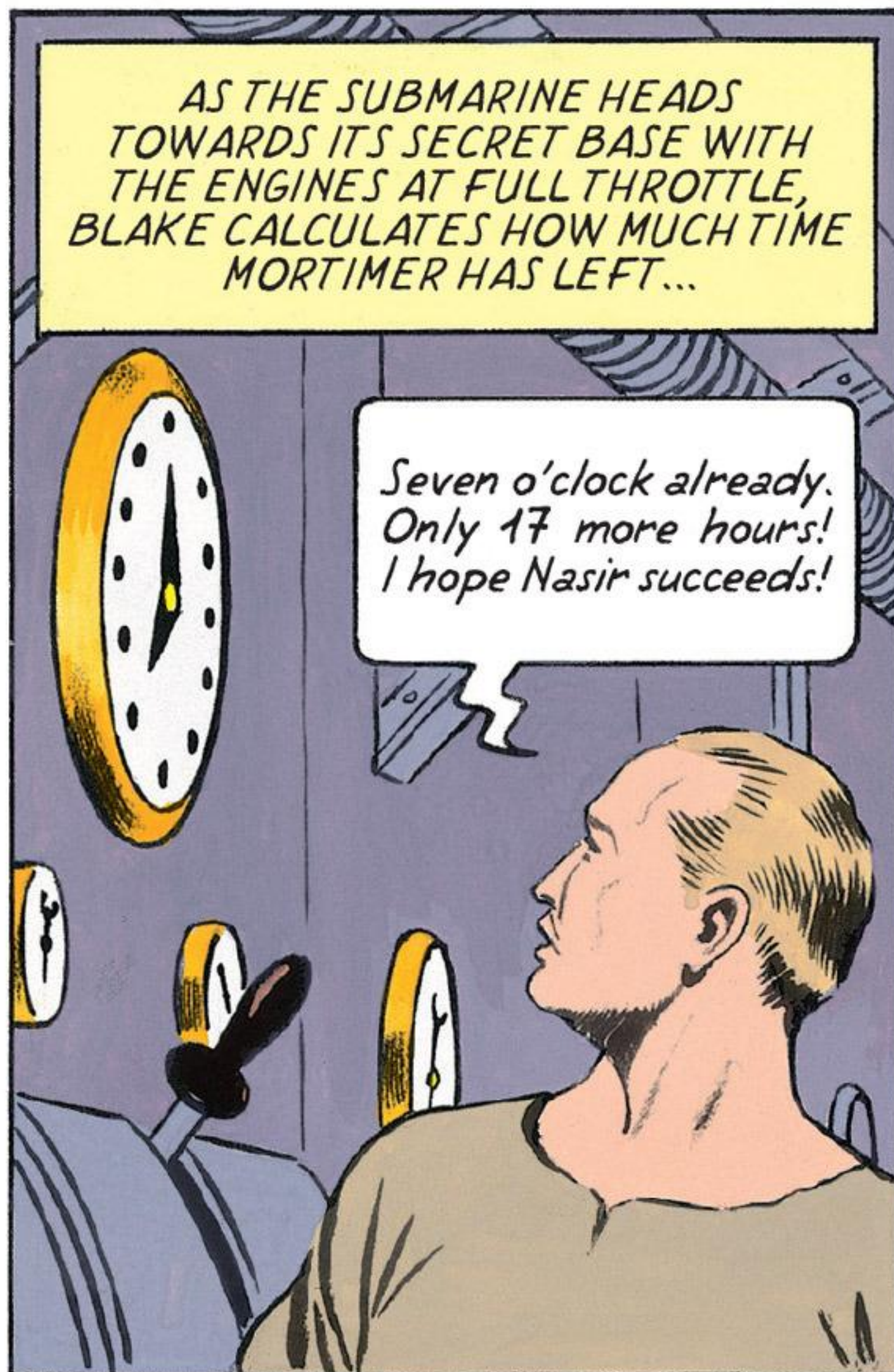


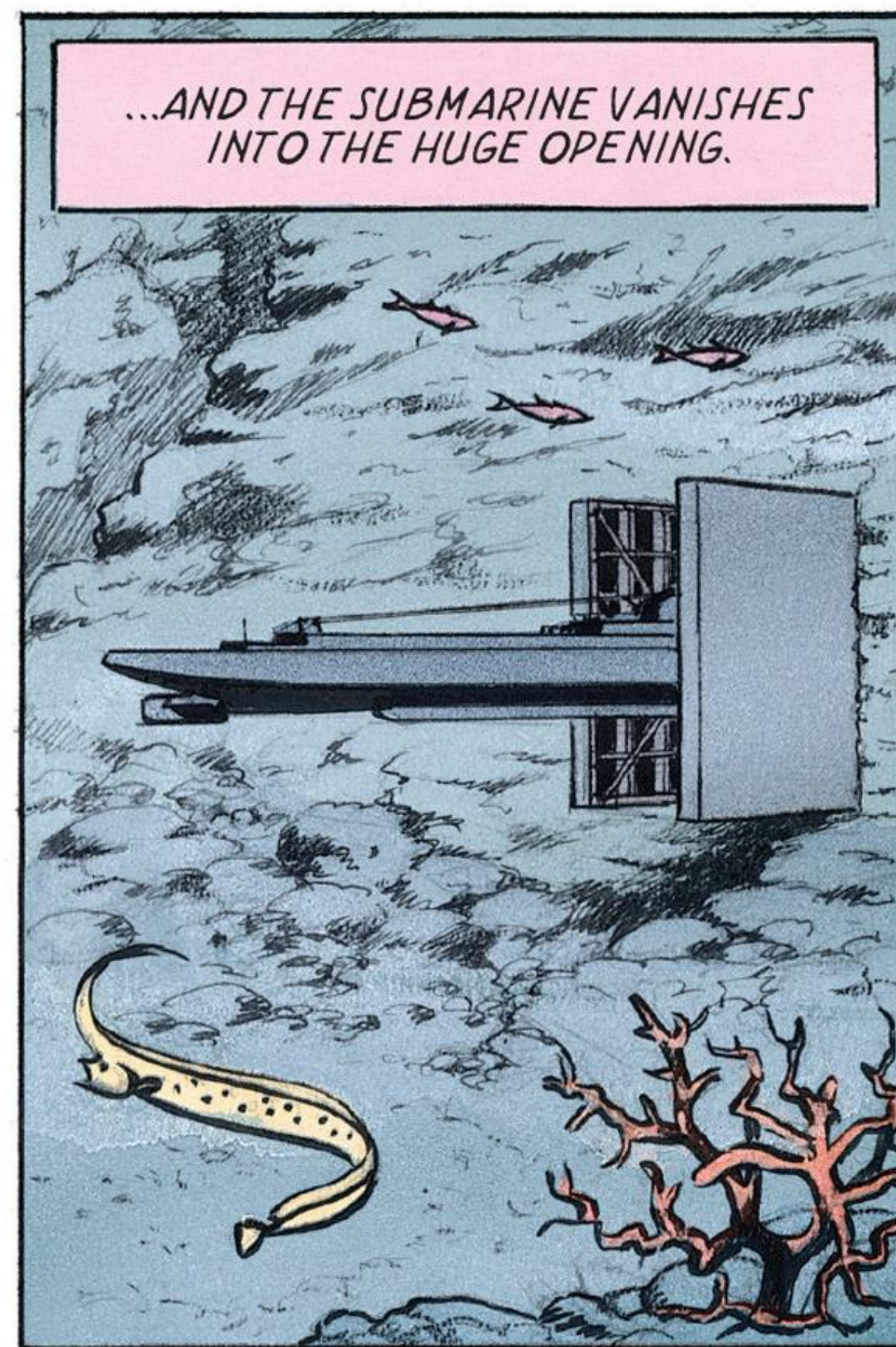
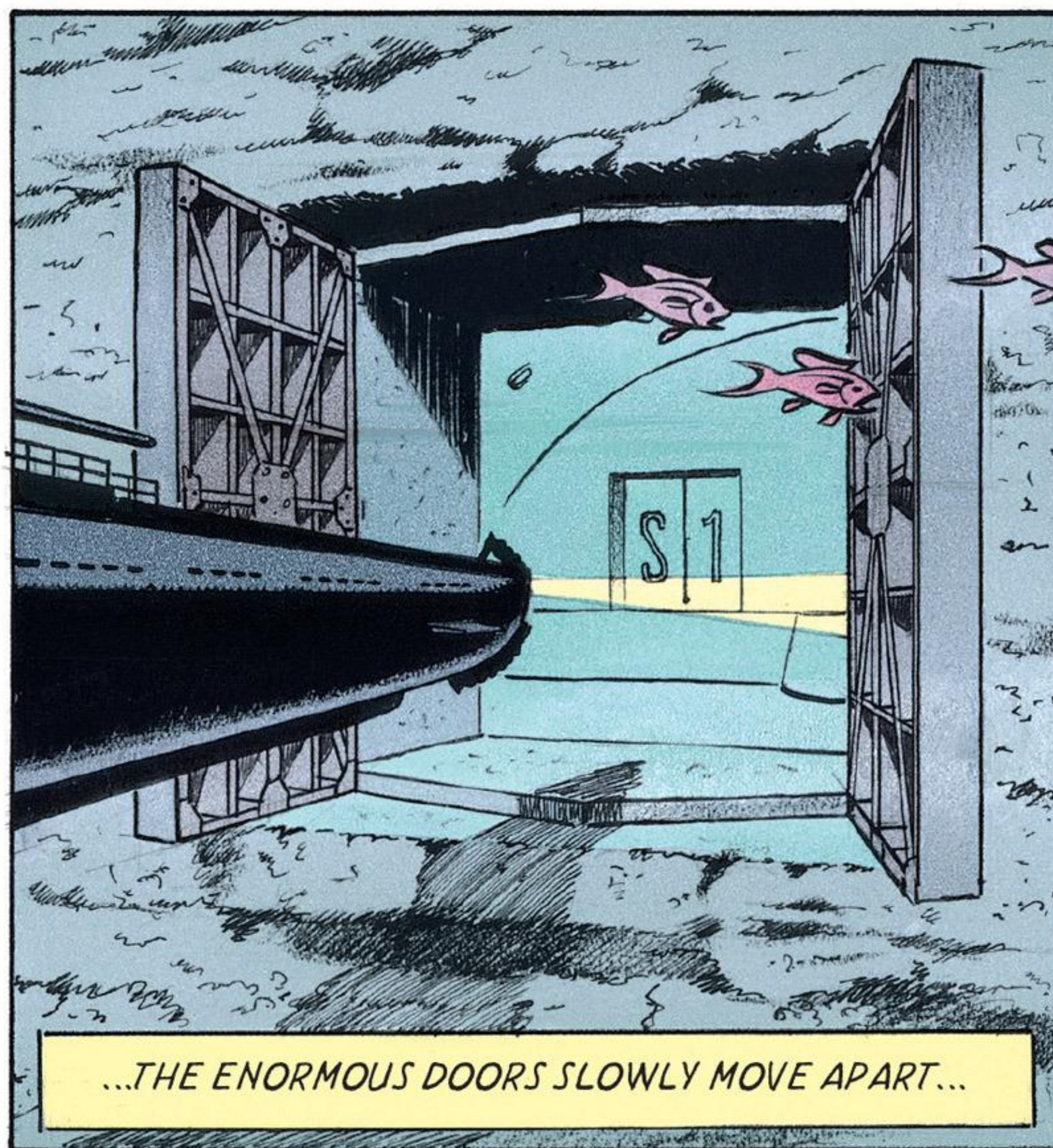
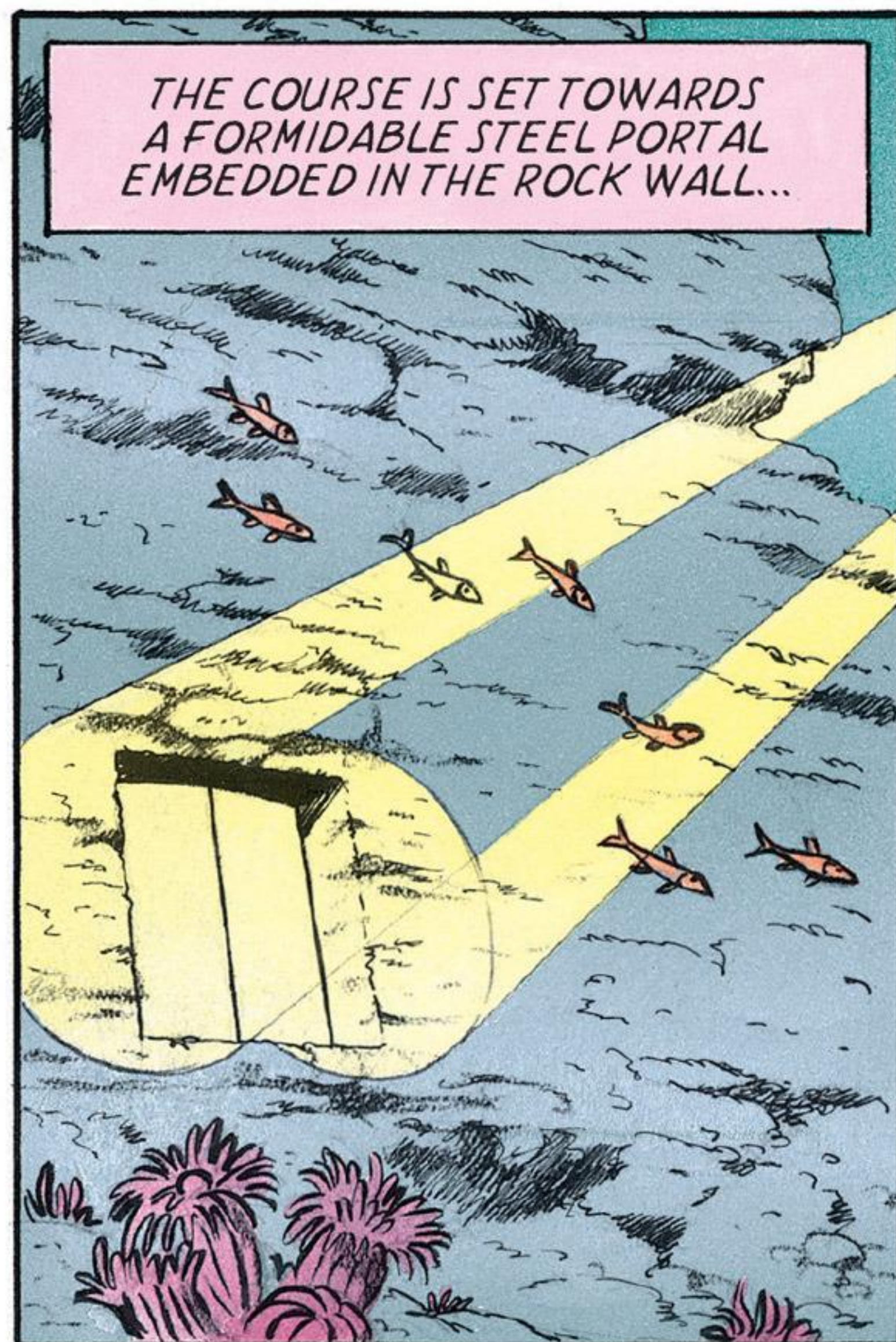
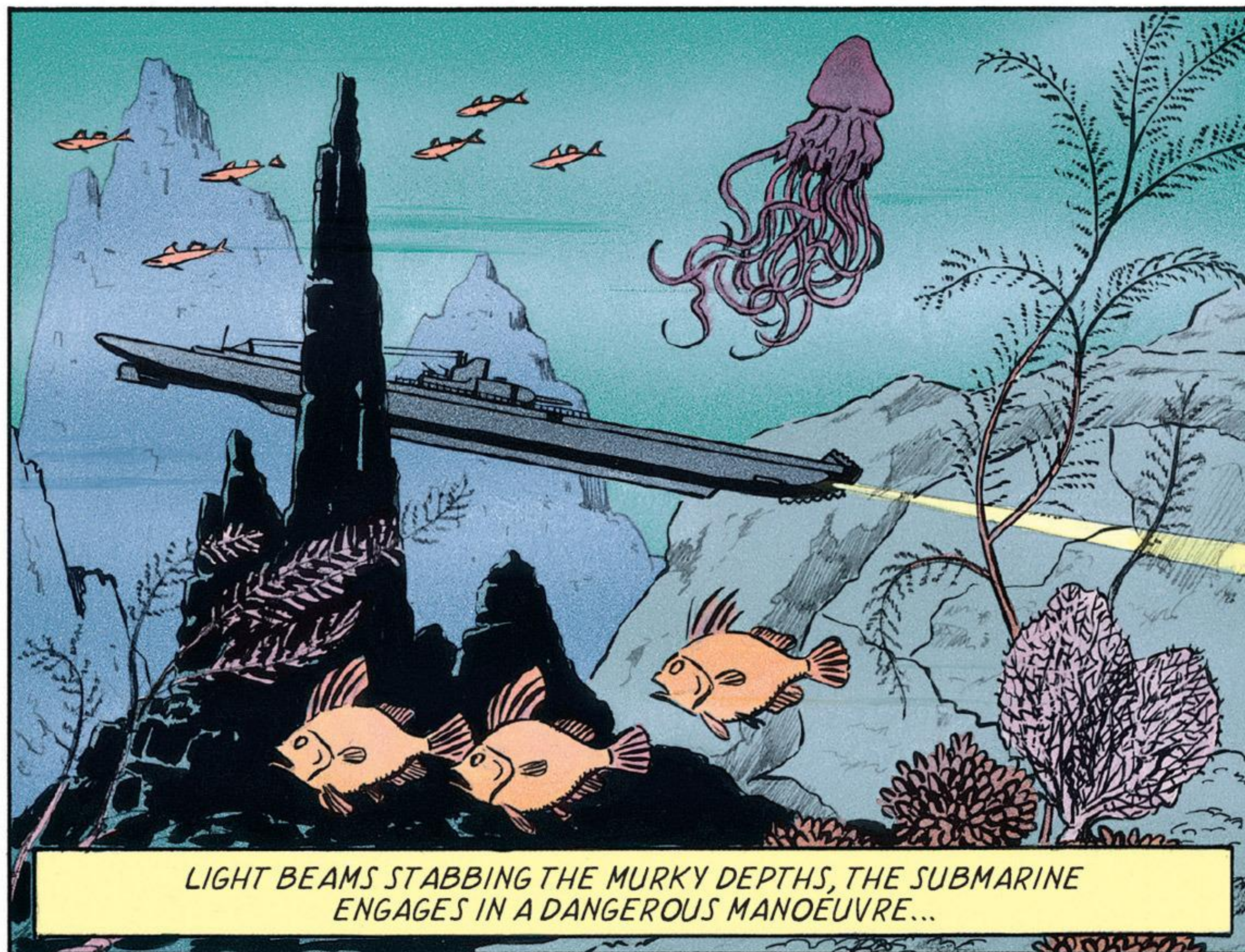
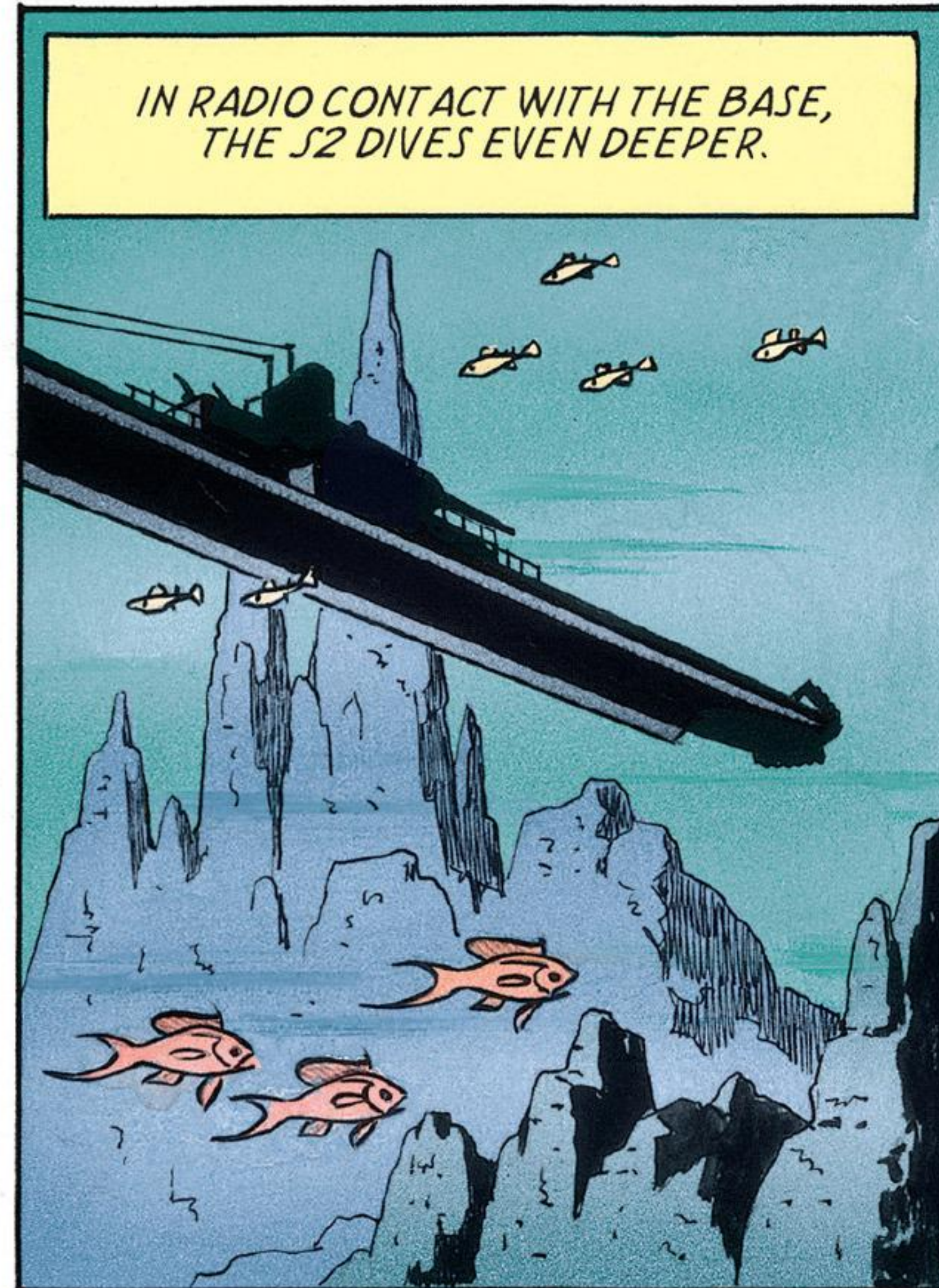


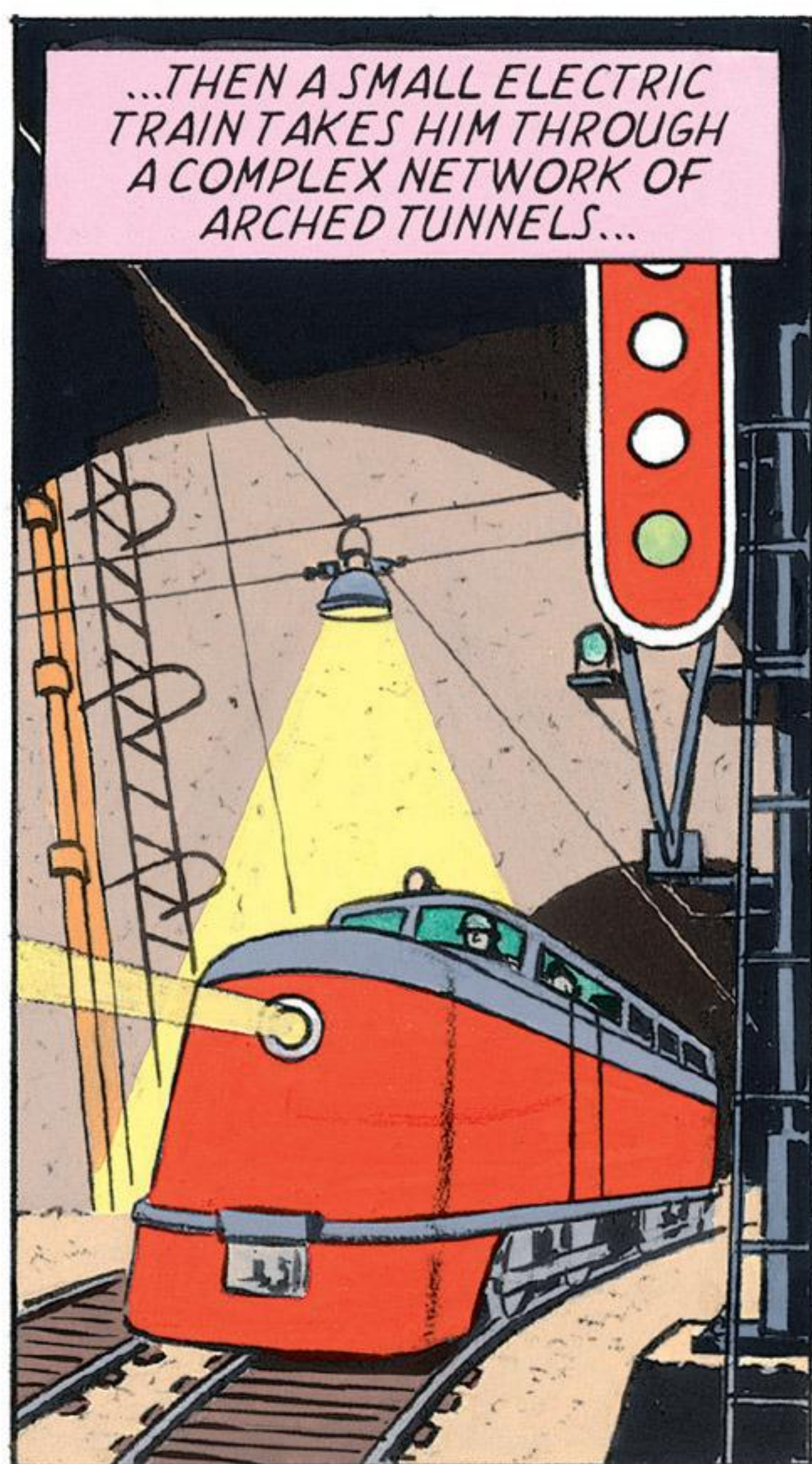
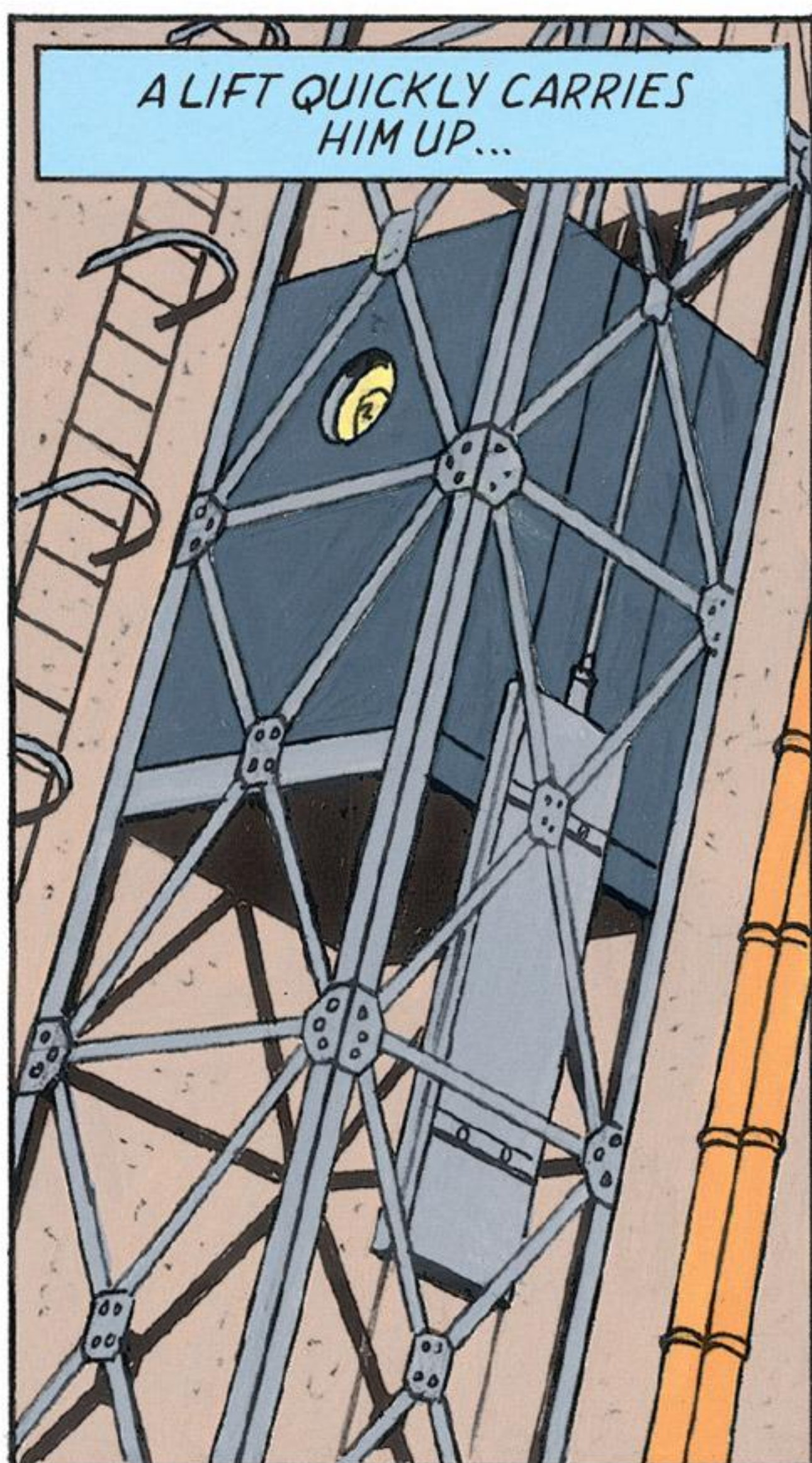
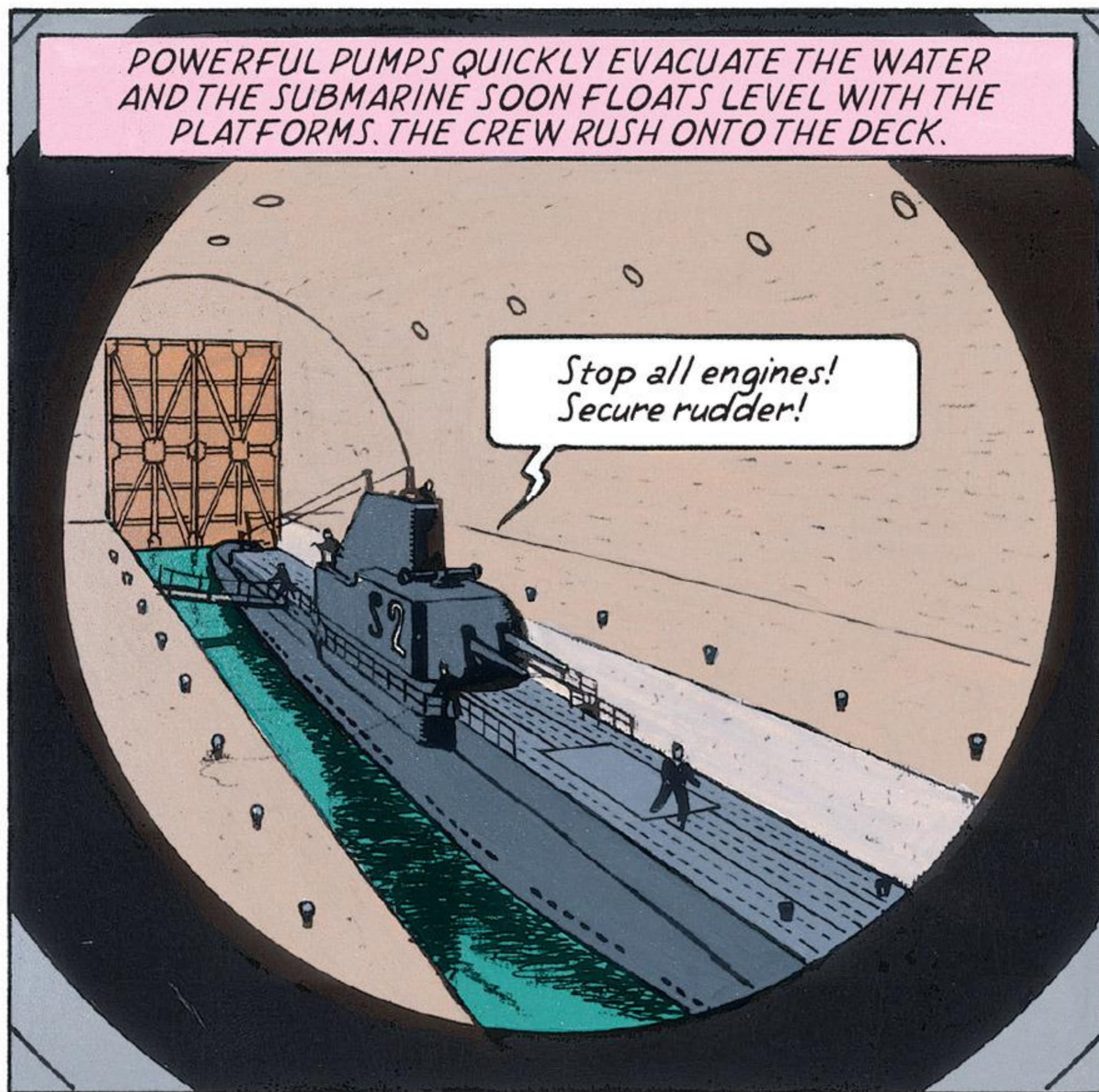
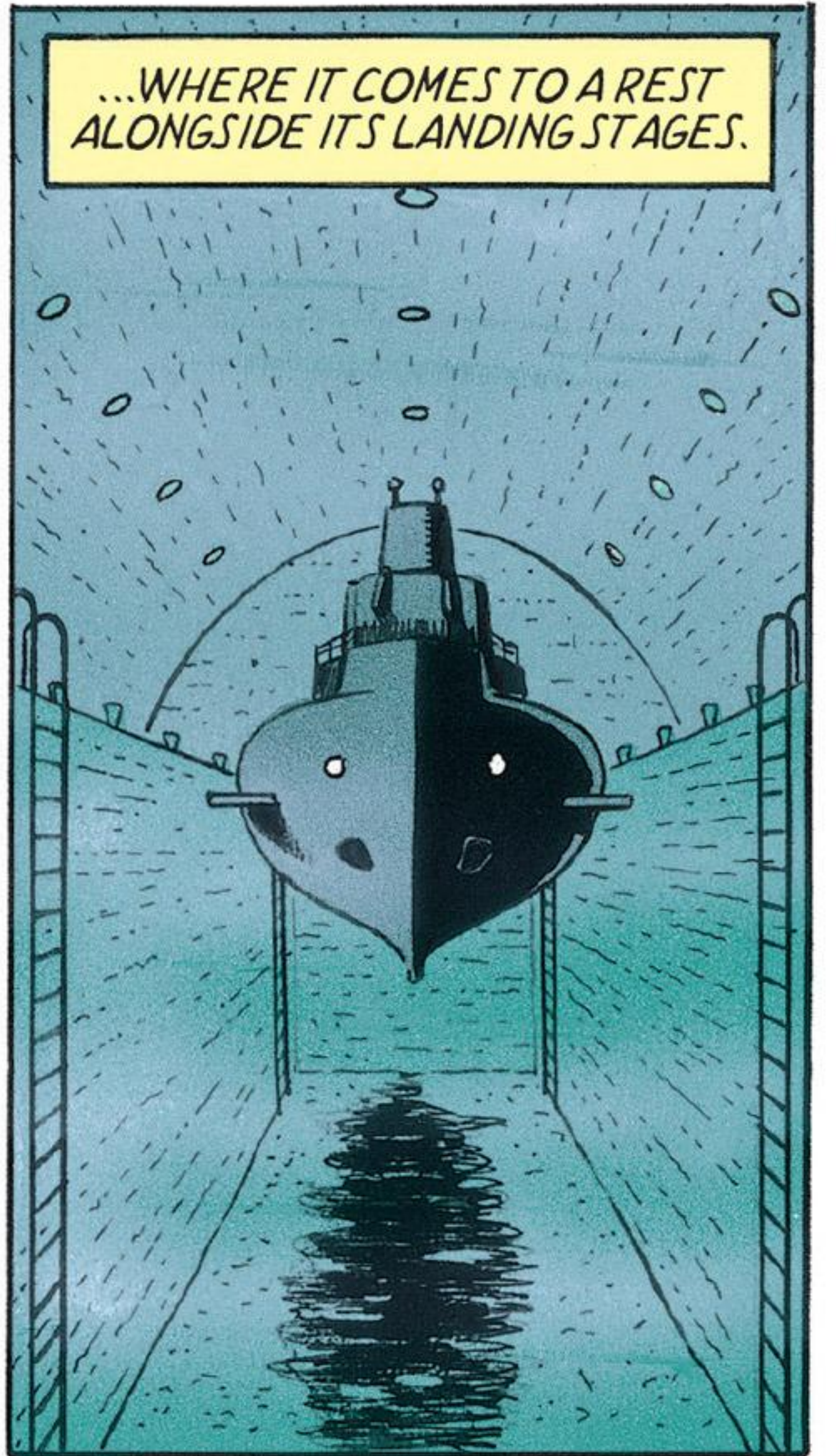
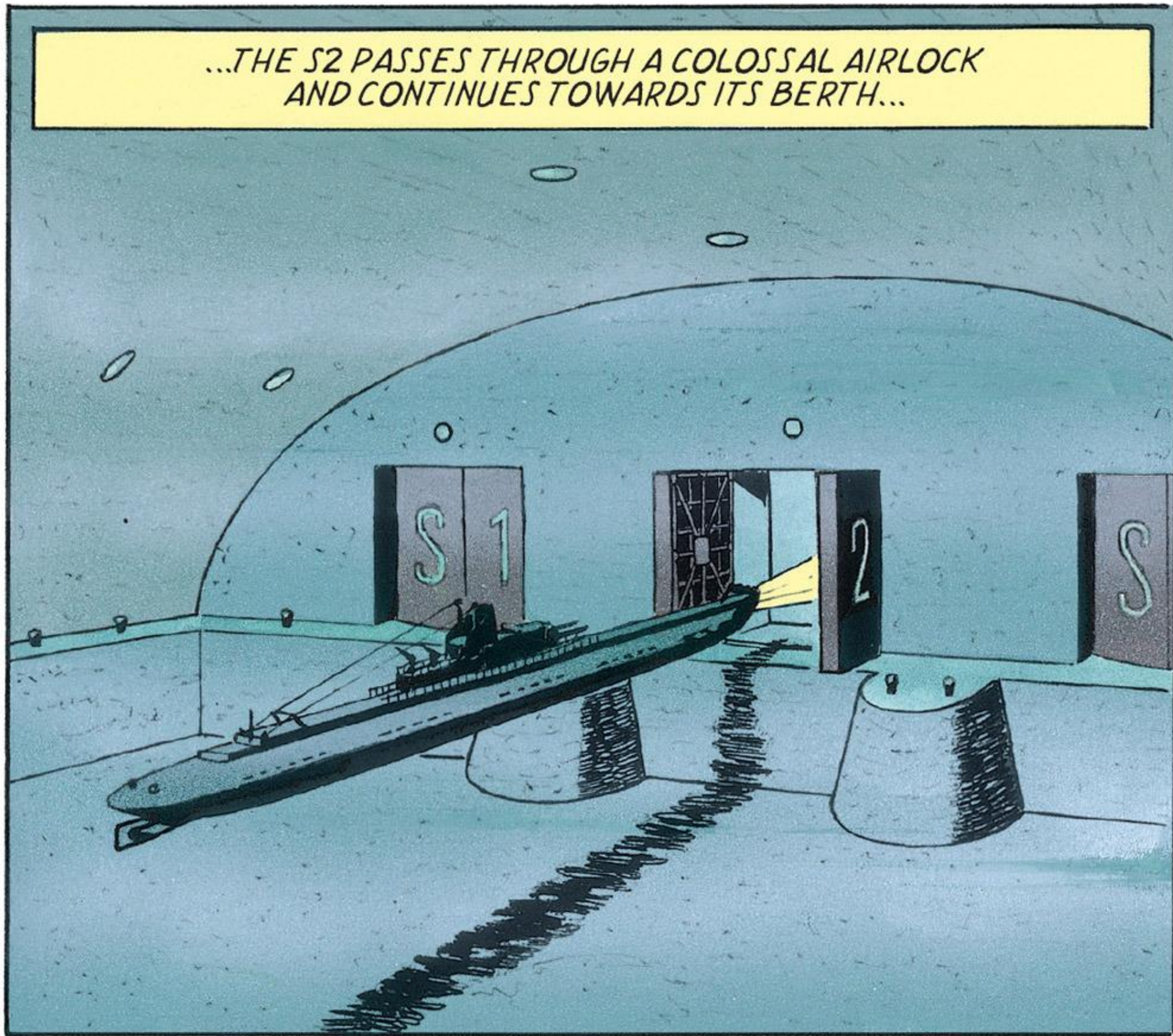
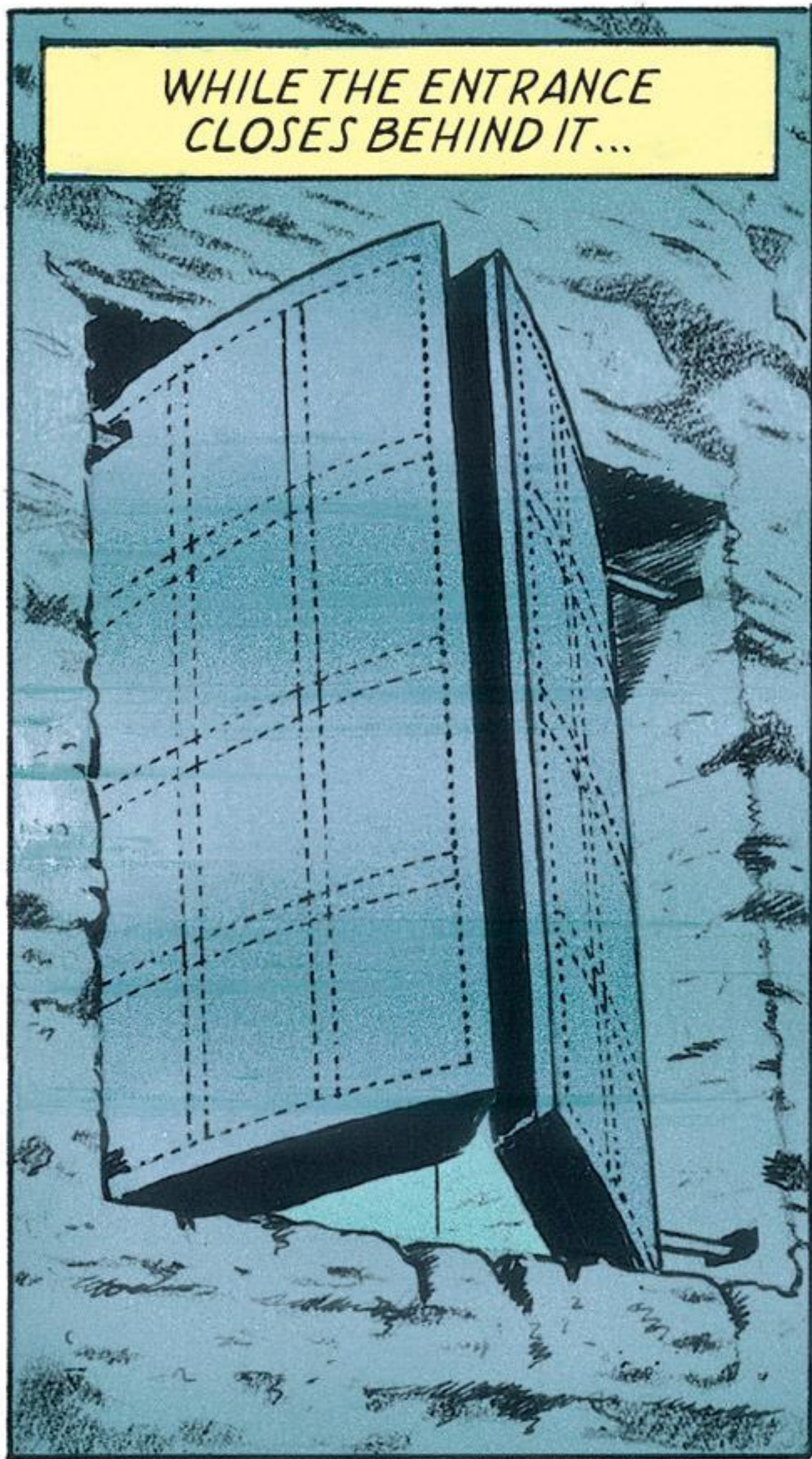


SUDDENLY, TWO CABLE LENGTHS FROM THE BOW, THE SUPERSTRUCTURE OF A SUBMARINE PIERCES THE SURFACE OF THE WATER...









HALF AN HOUR LATER, BLAKE IS COMPLETING HIS POST-MISSION REPORT TO SIR WILLIAM GRAY, THE ADMIRAL GOVERNOR OF THE BASE.

...Finally, I entrusted the fisherman with a message for Nasir in which I ask him to get in touch with Mortimer urgently and by any means possible. He's to advise Philip to pretend to give in and, if necessary, reveal part of the secret of the Swordfish.

I see. However, are you sure your message will reach its destination? And in time?

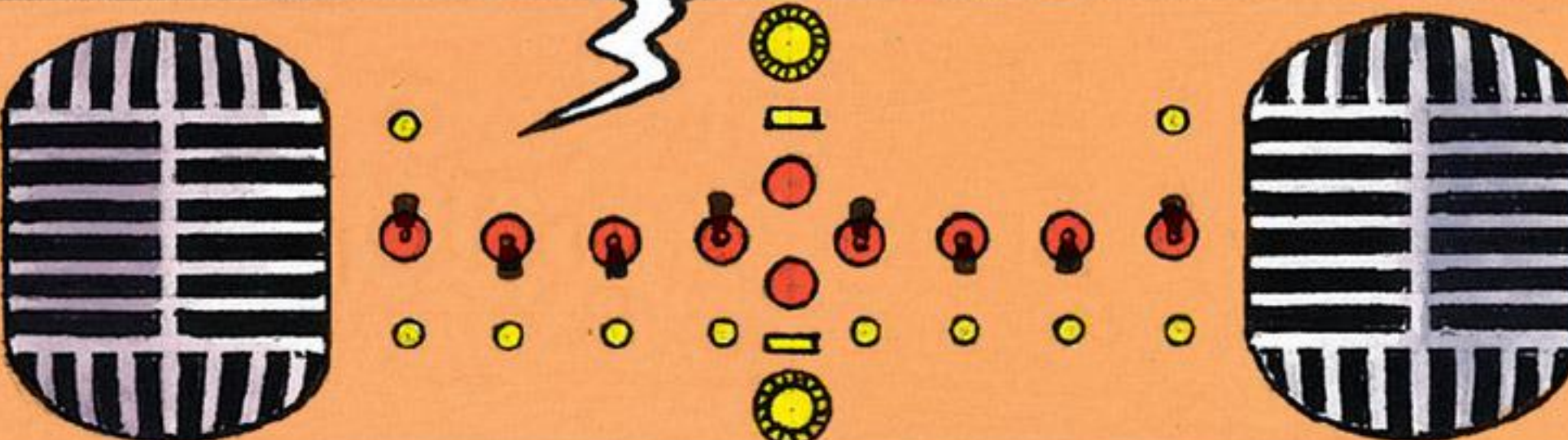
I hope so! We have to rescue Mortimer from their clutches as soon as possible. Without him, we are all but paralysed.

I quite agree! All the more so because during your absence I received some very interesting reports on the current situation and the frame of mind of enslaved nations...

...The world is ready to rebel against the tyranny of the Yellow Empire, for misery is everywhere. Concentration camps are filled with millions of poor souls. Workers and intellectuals are deported en masse, then dispatched to every distant corner of the empire. The traitors who made up the infamous fifth columns collaborate openly with the enemy and hold every position of power. Nevertheless, very active resistance cells, supported by our underground radio and press, have sprung up all across the world. Unfortunately, their leaders lack a concerted strategy – and, more importantly, an efficient weapon...

Yes! Which is precisely what the Swordfish would be! In short, everything is unfolding as we had predicted; it'll be up to us to give the signal of the uprising... But without Mortimer and his plans, and also the necessary technicians and specialists...

Hello! Hello! This is post four. Group J has just returned. The new contingent has gathered in the hall.



Well, Blake, as it happens, this is one of our commandos returning from a raid on the Bahrain transit camp. What do you say?...

All right, let's go and have a look.

A SHORT WHILE LATER, INSIDE THE HALL WHERE THE MEN FREED FROM THE BAHRAIN CAMP ARE WAITING...

Congratulations, Jackson! Good work!

Three injured, one seriously.

Any losses?

Gentlemen, as governor of this base and in the name of His Britannic Majesty, it is my pleasure to welcome you here. Now, please would you tell us who you are?

Lieutenant José Lopez, assigned to the aeronautical laboratory of Cartagena airbase.

Colonel Errol Hall, ballistics expert from the White Sands centre.

Dr Sen Tsie, of Nanking University, director of State Laboratories.

Captain Léon Didier, professor of ballistics at Toulon's Naval Academy.

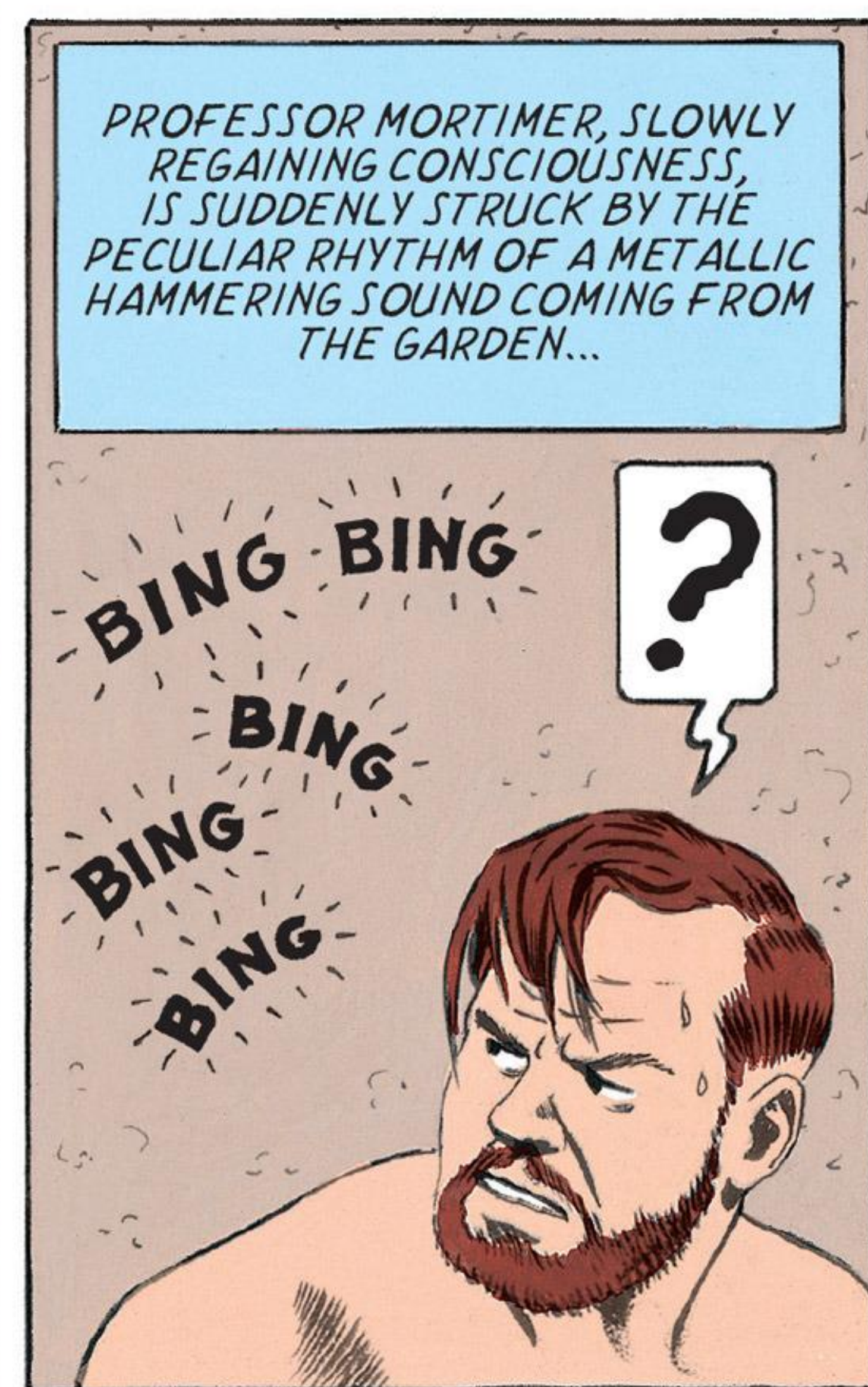
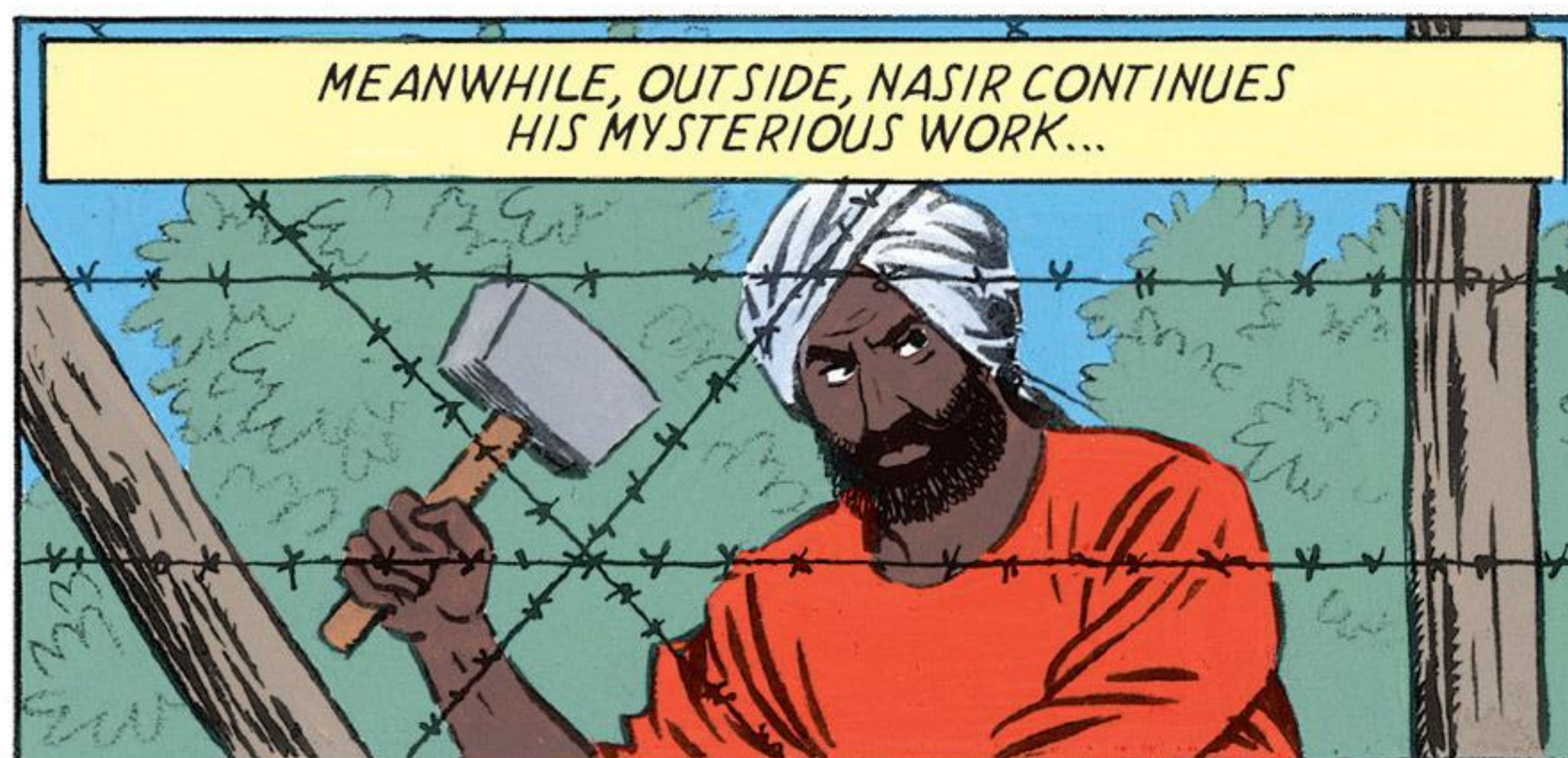
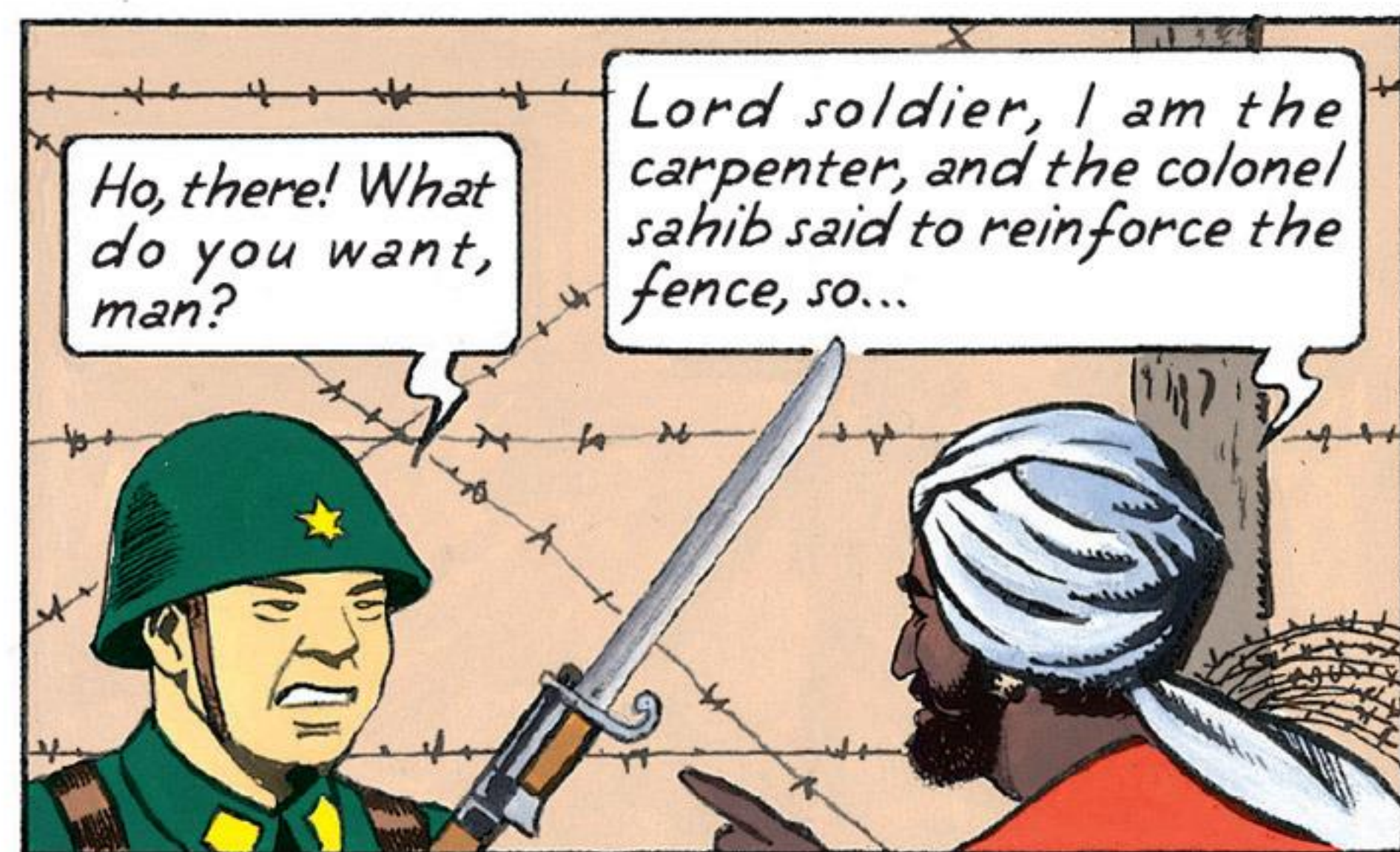
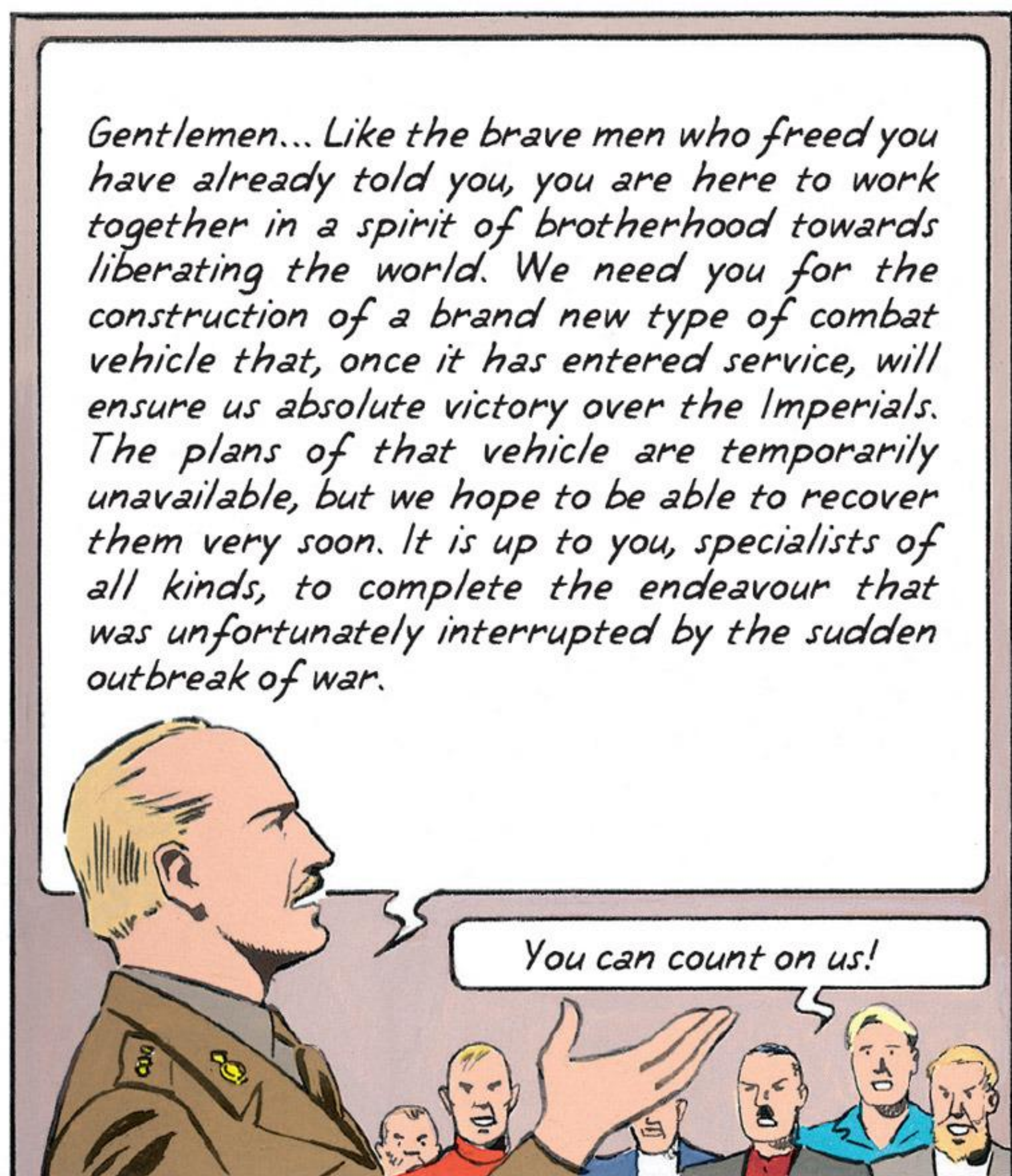
Thank you, gentlemen. Now, Captain Blake here is briefly going to explain what we expect from you. Over to you, Captain.

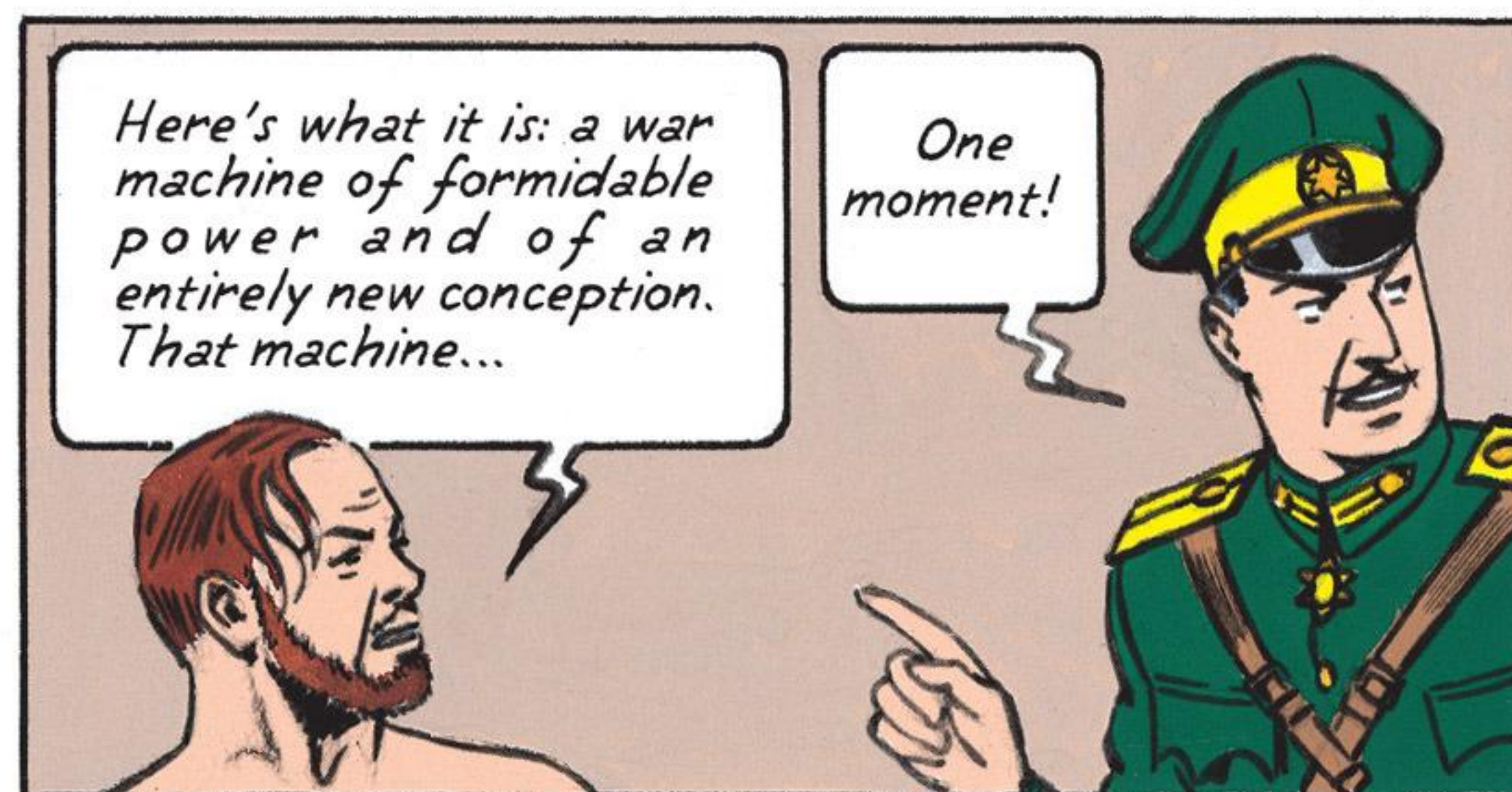
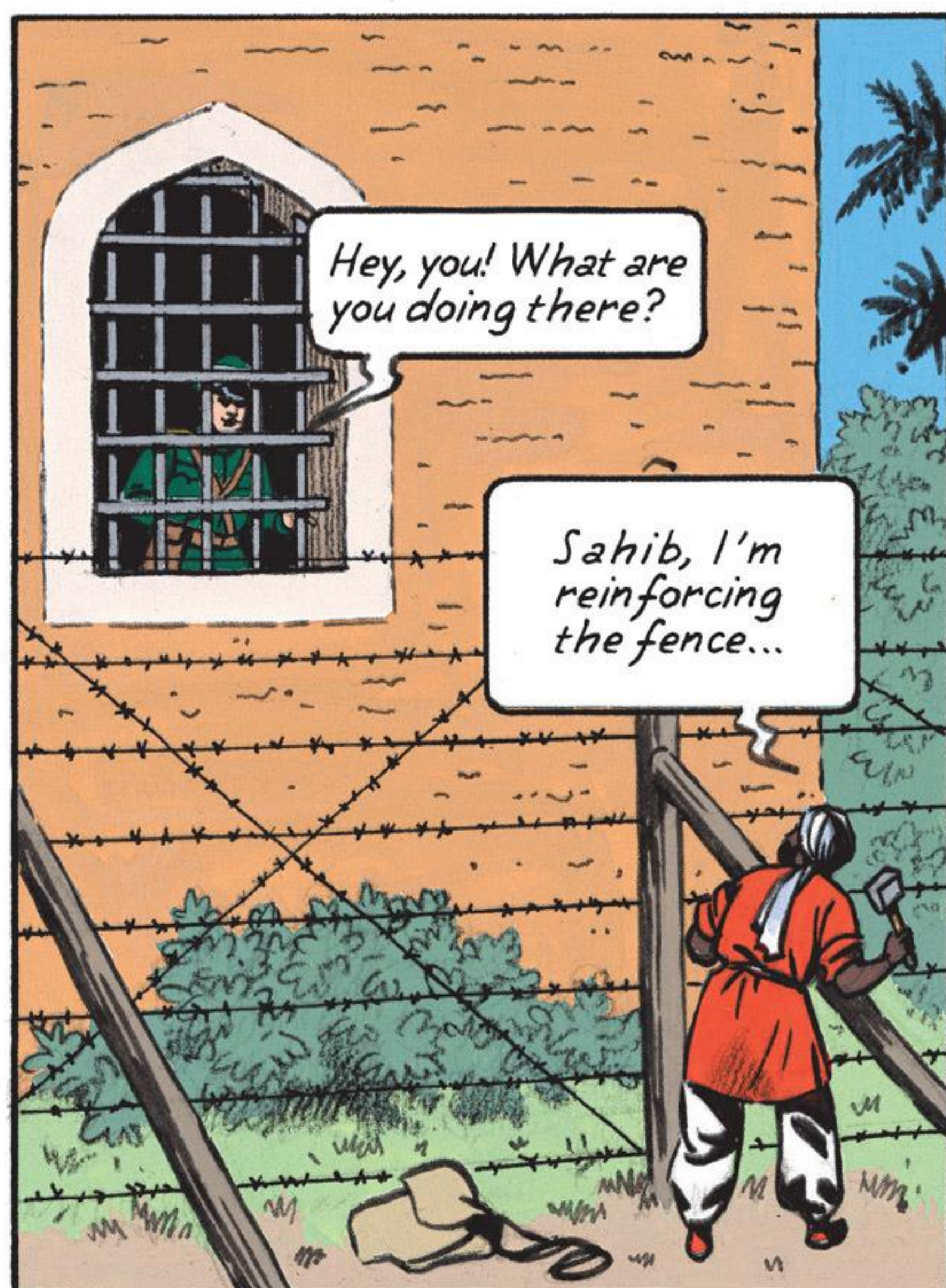
Jean Pirelle, professor of physical chemistry at the University of Brussels.

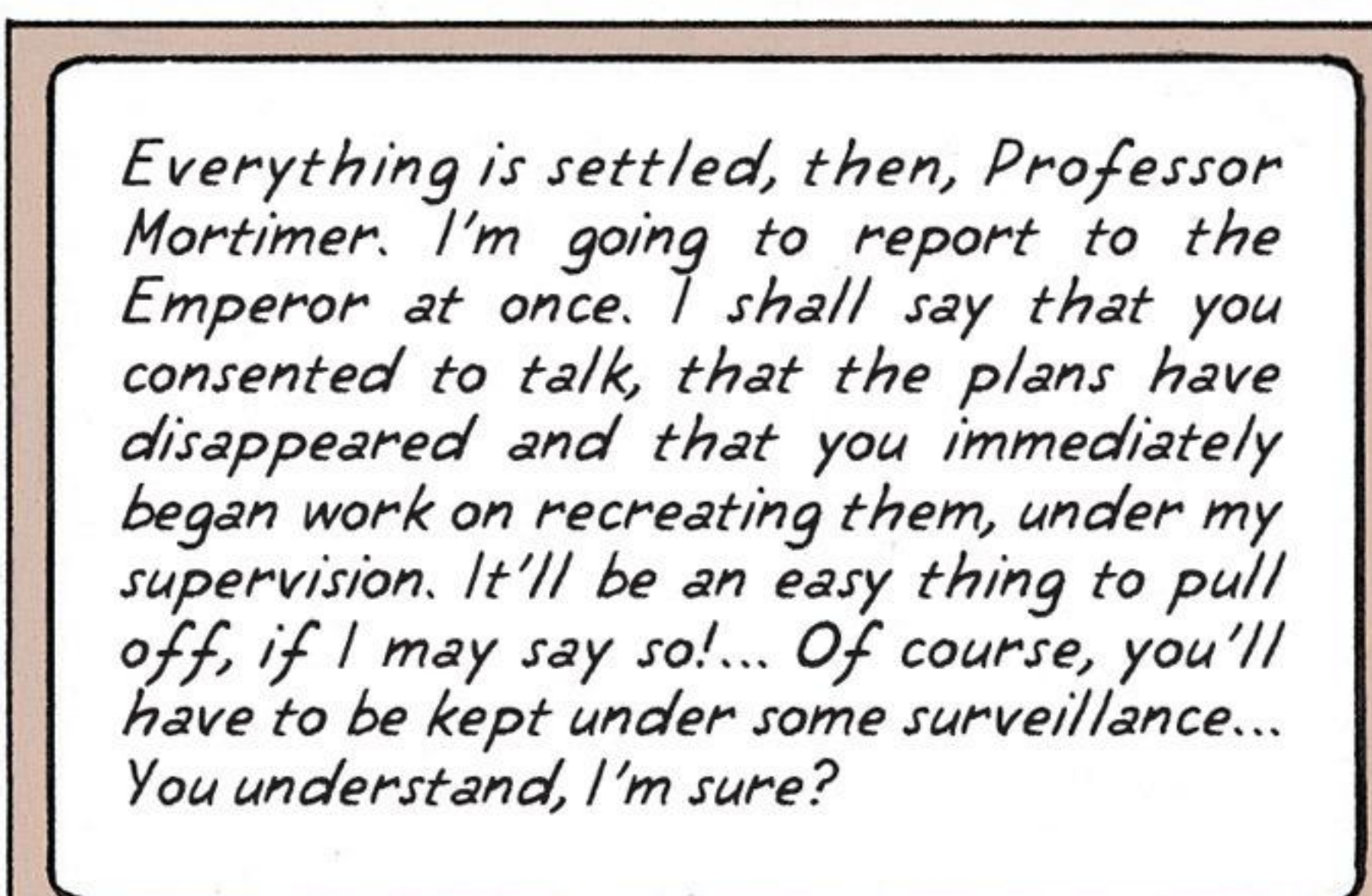
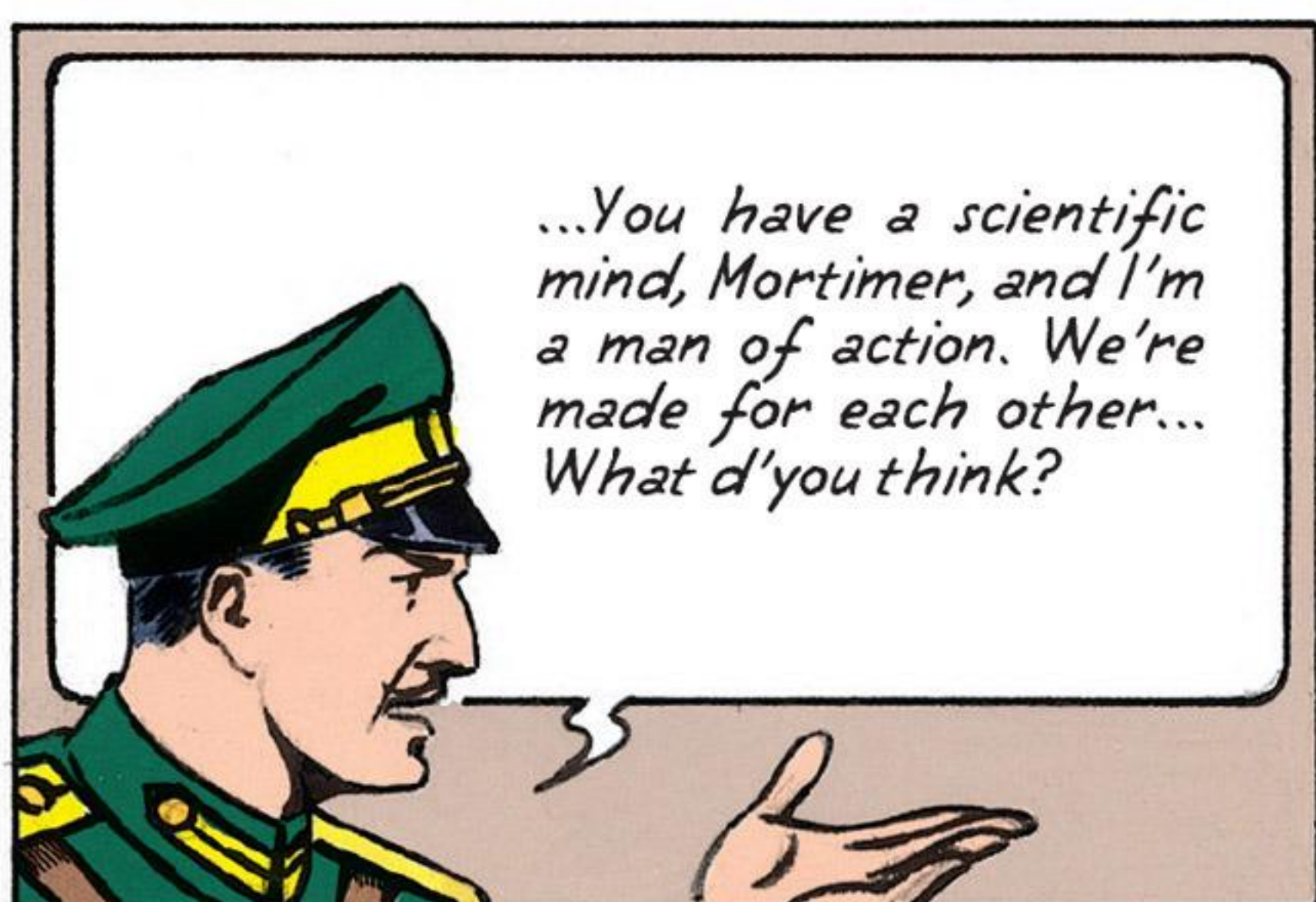
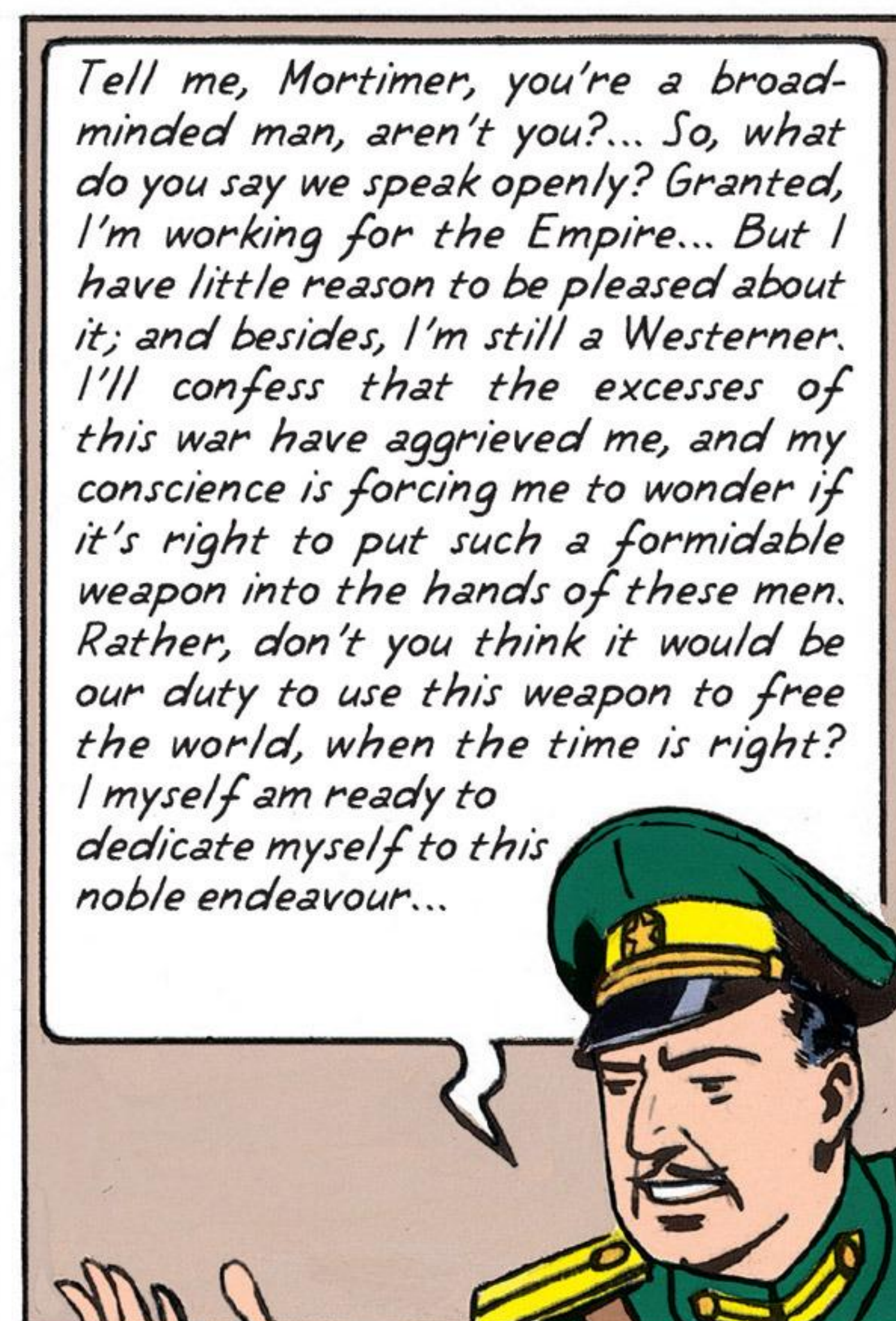
Ivan Mikulin, teacher at the Moscow Aviation Institute.

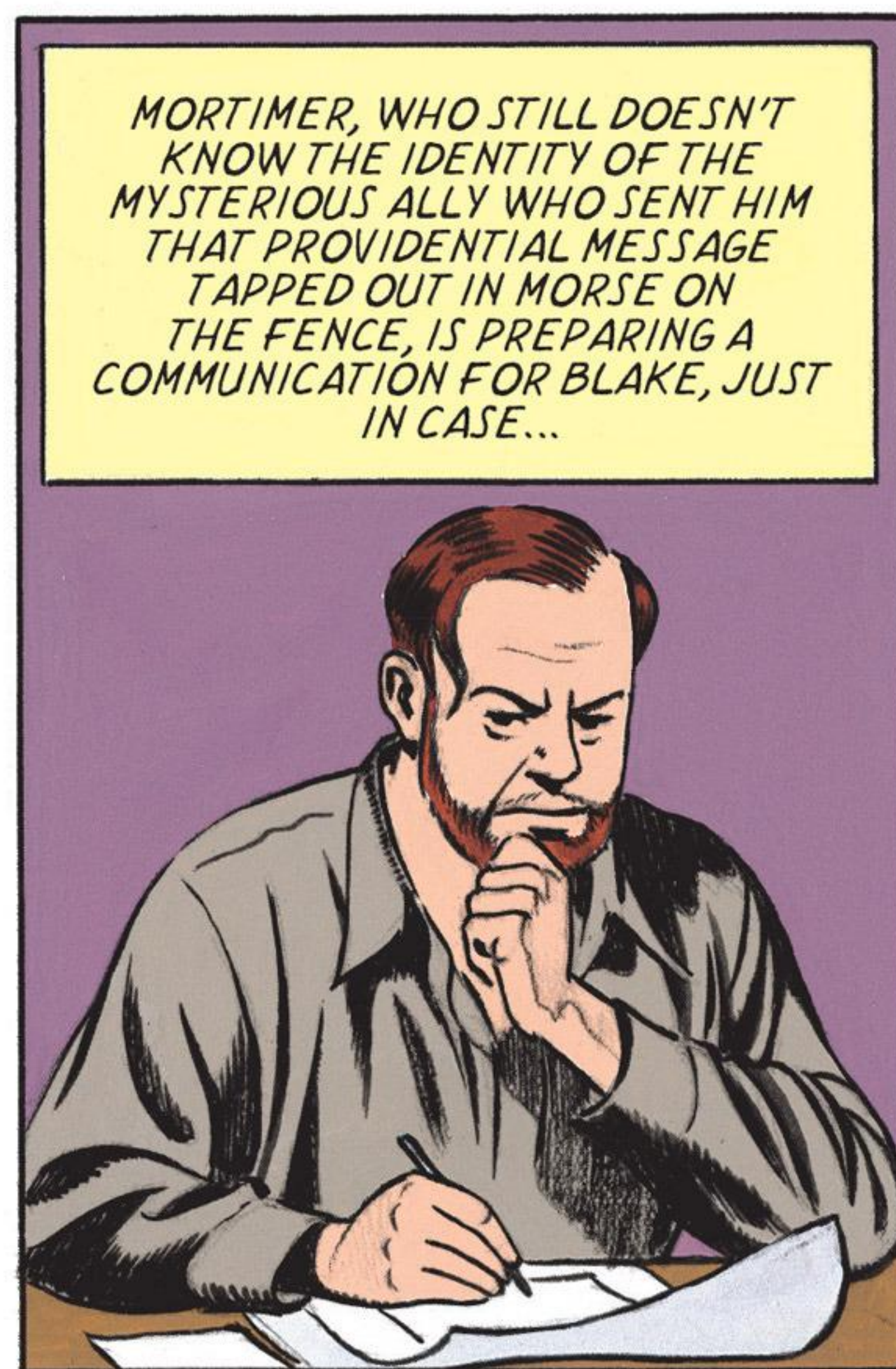
Professor Alvéar, working for the Nuclear Research Laboratory of Buenos Aires.

Axel Haakon, of the Artillery Test Facility in Gothenburg.



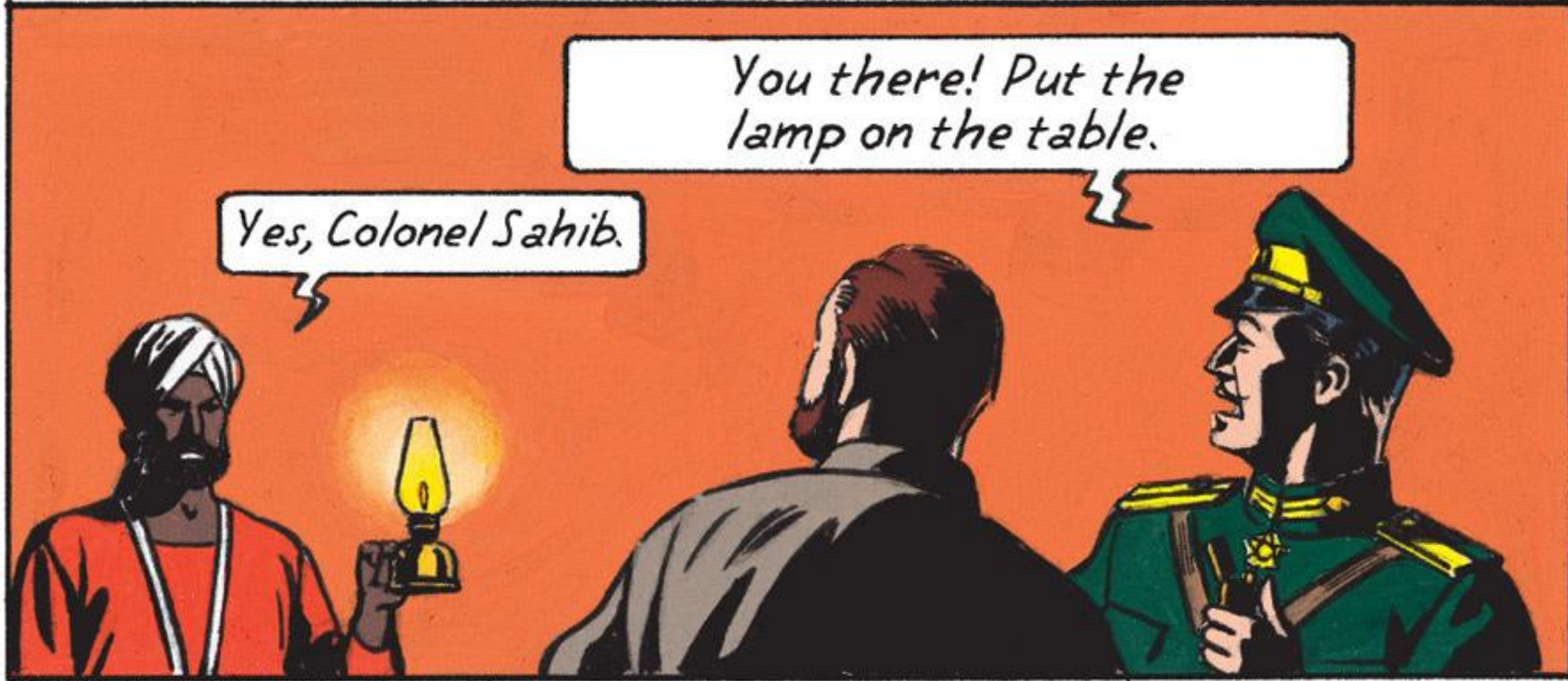






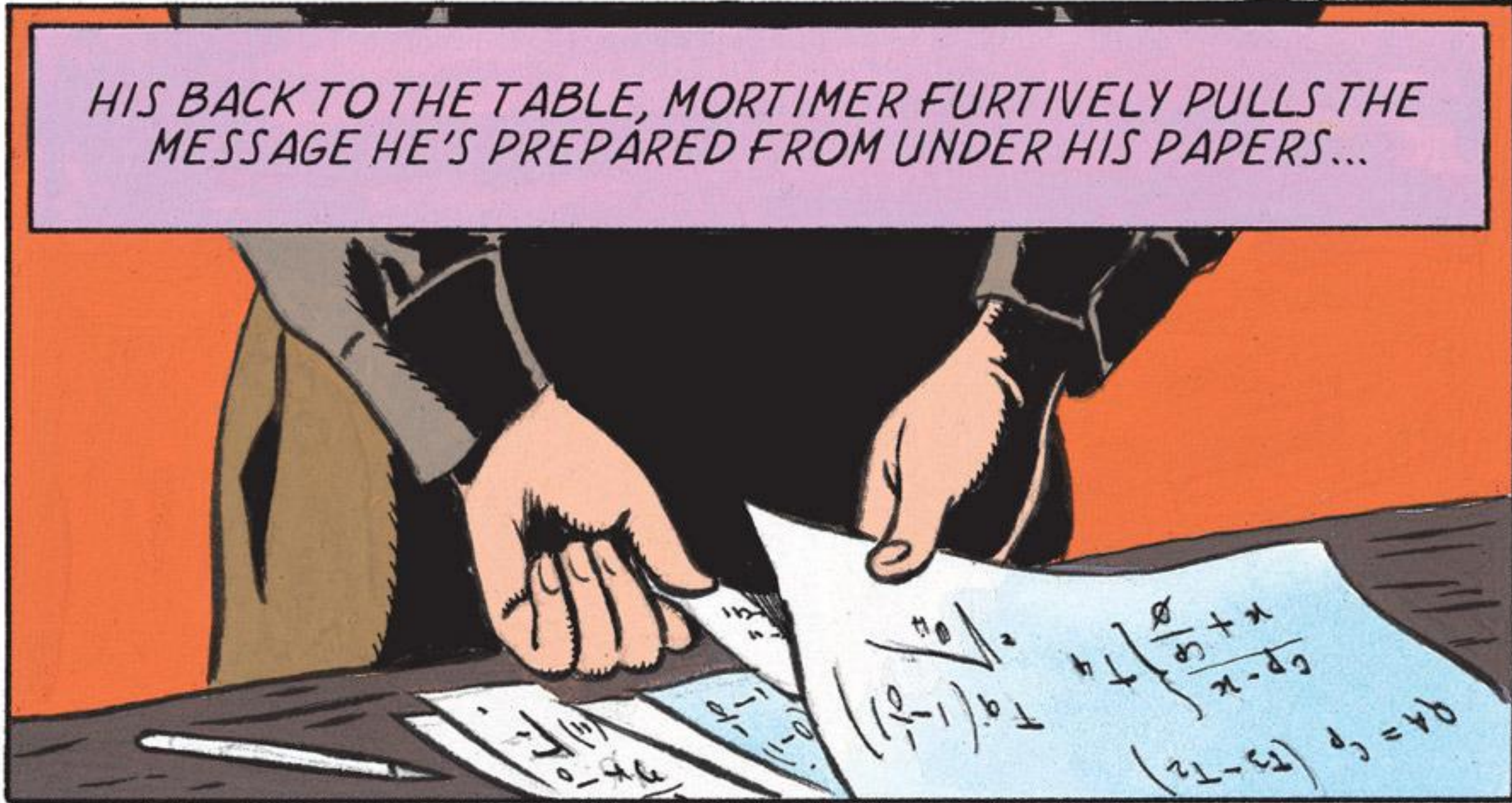


STUNNED, MORTIMER HAS JUST RECOGNISED THE LIGHT BEARER AS NASIR...



You there! Put the lamp on the table.

Yes, Colonel Sahib.



HIS BACK TO THE TABLE, MORTIMER FURTIVELY PULLS THE MESSAGE HE'S PREPARED FROM UNDER HIS PAPERS...



...CRUMPLES IT, THEN LETS IT DROP INTO THE WASTEPAPER BASKET.



HIS PLOY HASN'T ESCAPED NASIR'S WATCHFUL EYES.

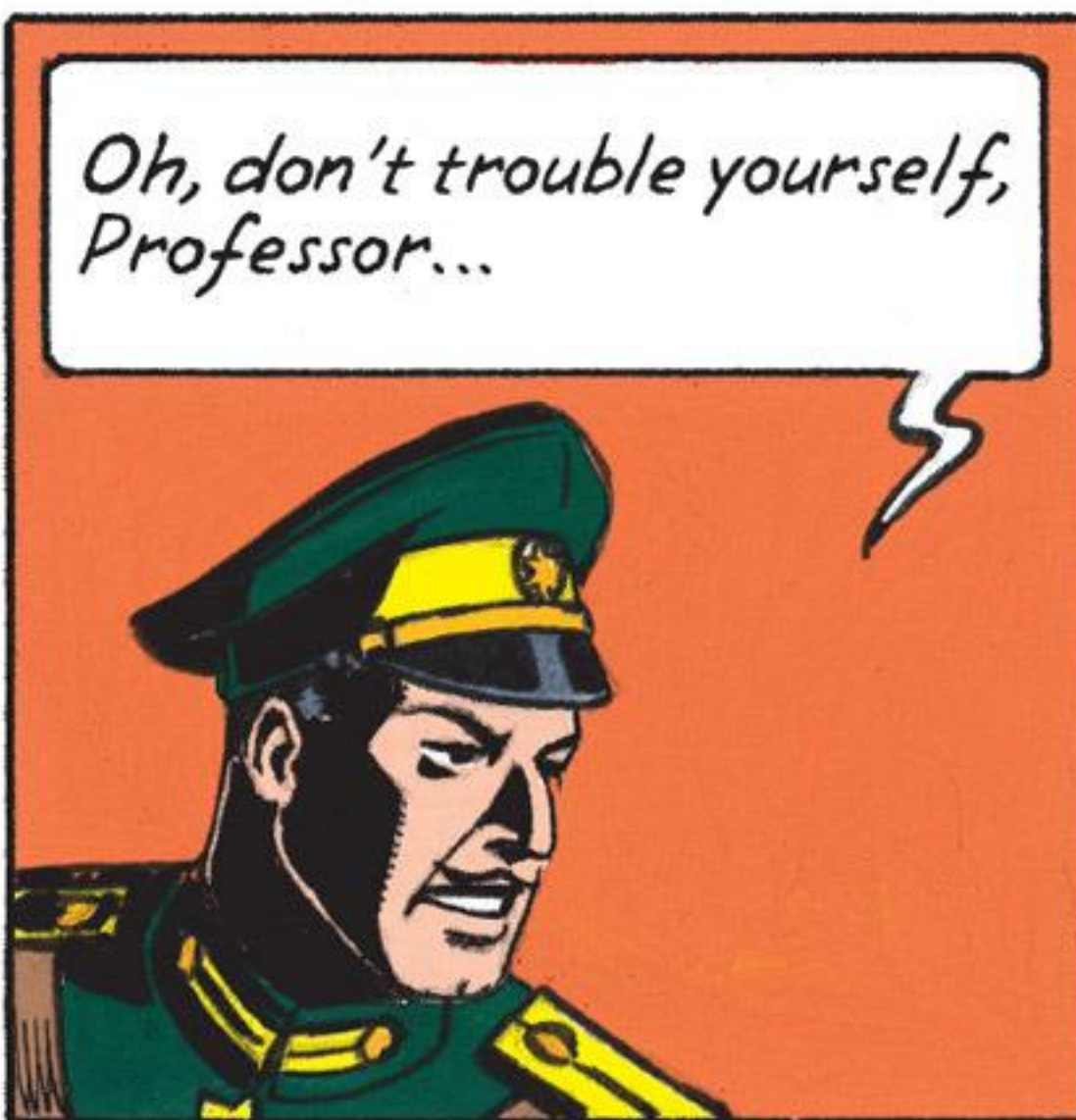
And empty this basket while you're at it.

Right away, Sahib.



Blasted lighter!... It just won't work...

Hold on, Colonel, I should have some matches somewhere.



Oh, don't trouble yourself, Professor...



Hey, you! Come here!



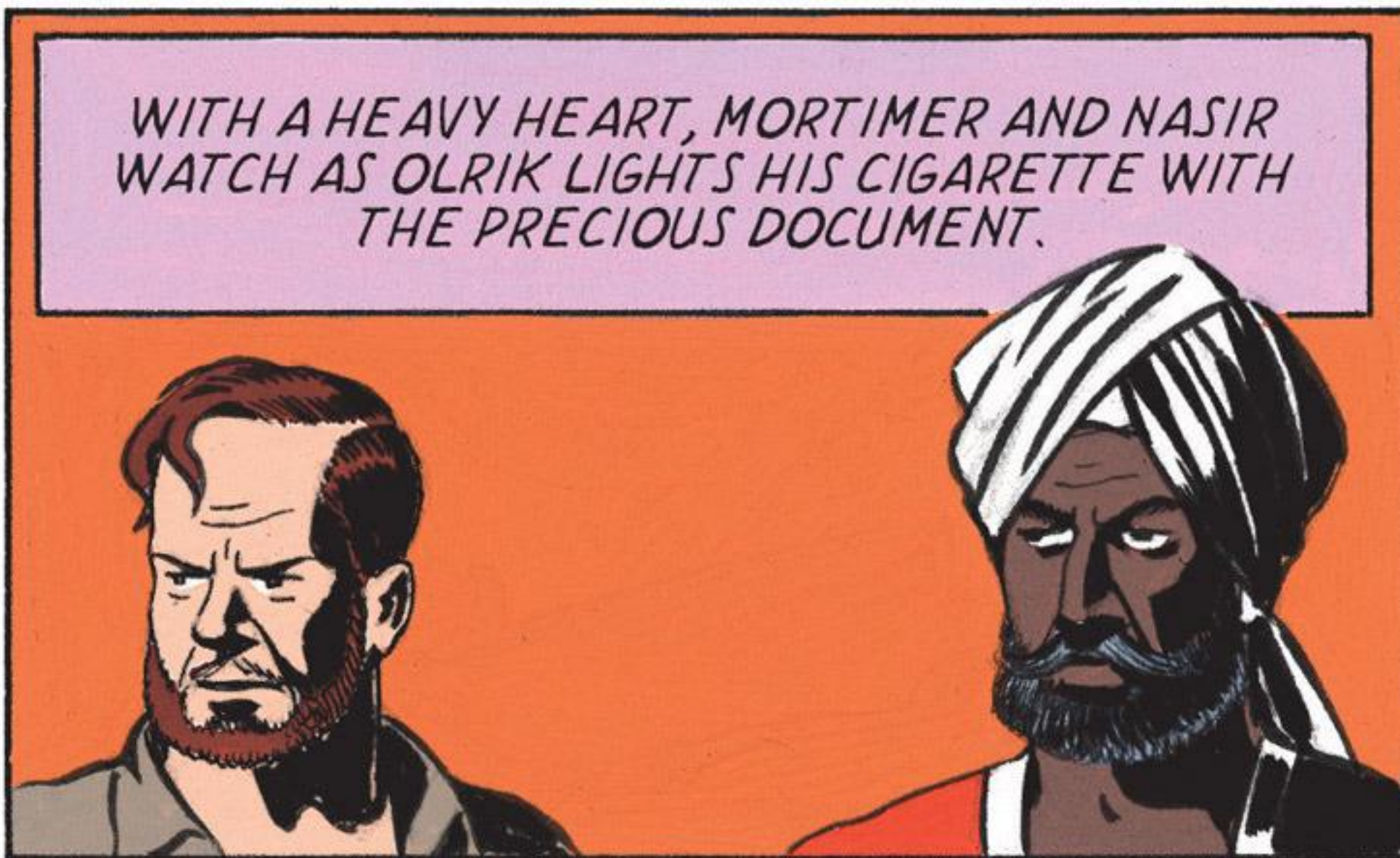
OLRIK GRABS THE PAPER THAT MORTIMER HAS JUST DROPPED IN THE BASKET...

Ah, this will do!



...TWISTS IT, THEN WALKS OVER TO THE LAMP AND CALMLY SETS IT ALIGHT.

Ha! You see, my dear Mortimer, in all circumstances, one must seize the opportunity when it presents itself...



WITH A HEAVY HEART, MORTIMER AND NASIR WATCH AS OLRIK LIGHTS HIS CIGARETTE WITH THE PRECIOUS DOCUMENT.



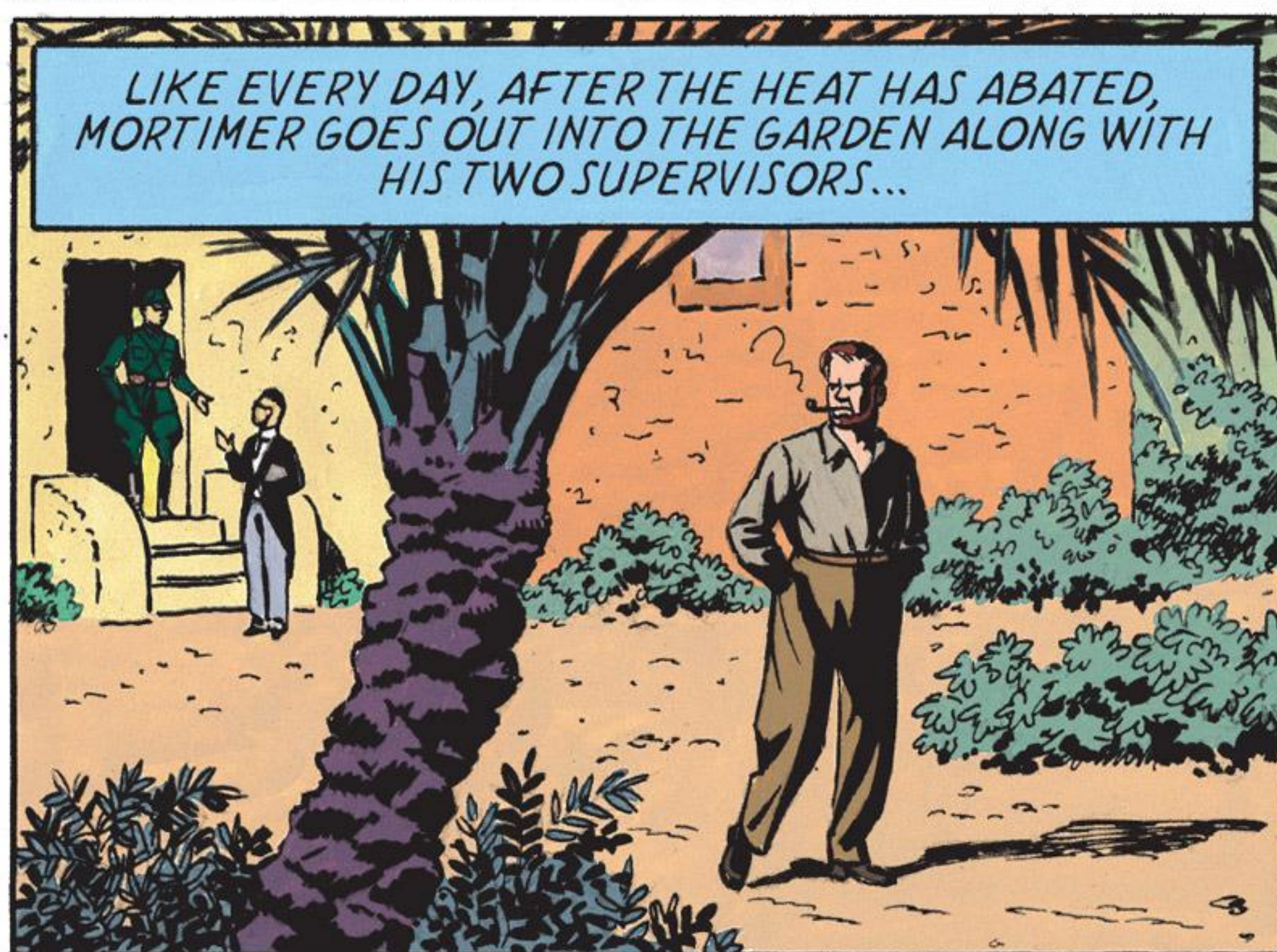
...For example, in a situation like this...



...Well, well - aren't you the one who was working on the fence the other day?

Me, Sahib?





BACK AT THE SECRET BASE, BLAKE AND SIR WILLIAM EXAMINE NASIR'S REPORT, WHICH HAS JUST BEEN SENT TO THEM.

Without a doubt, Sir William, there's something in this message I don't understand. It's quite possible that Nasir made a mistake copying it – especially if the signs were written in the sand.

Indeed... Blake, would you read it one more time?...

'Captain Sahib, I've managed to make contact with the professor. He drew some signs in the sand for me to memorise and forward to you. Here they are...'

So far, it's clear enough, but then there's that blasted cryptogram.

BELOW NASIR'S ENCODED MESSAGE IS A LINE OF MYSTIFYING SIGNS.

Let's work through it again. The first sign very likely represents the Swordfish, since it's a stylised reproduction of its shape.

Therefore, the message would relate to the lost plans...

Without doubt!... So the second sign would seem to indicate the place where the plans were lost and where Mortimer was captured – that is to say the pyramid...

Indeed that seems plausible enough...

Finally, the letters SW would probably give us the side of the pyramid where the documents are hidden. That leaves the cross! Maybe he drew one on the rock at the hiding spot itself?...

Yes... But how do you explain that Olrik's own search didn't lead anywhere?

True... Well, in that case, there's no alternative. We have to look on site. I'm going to head there immediately with a few men, by the overland route...

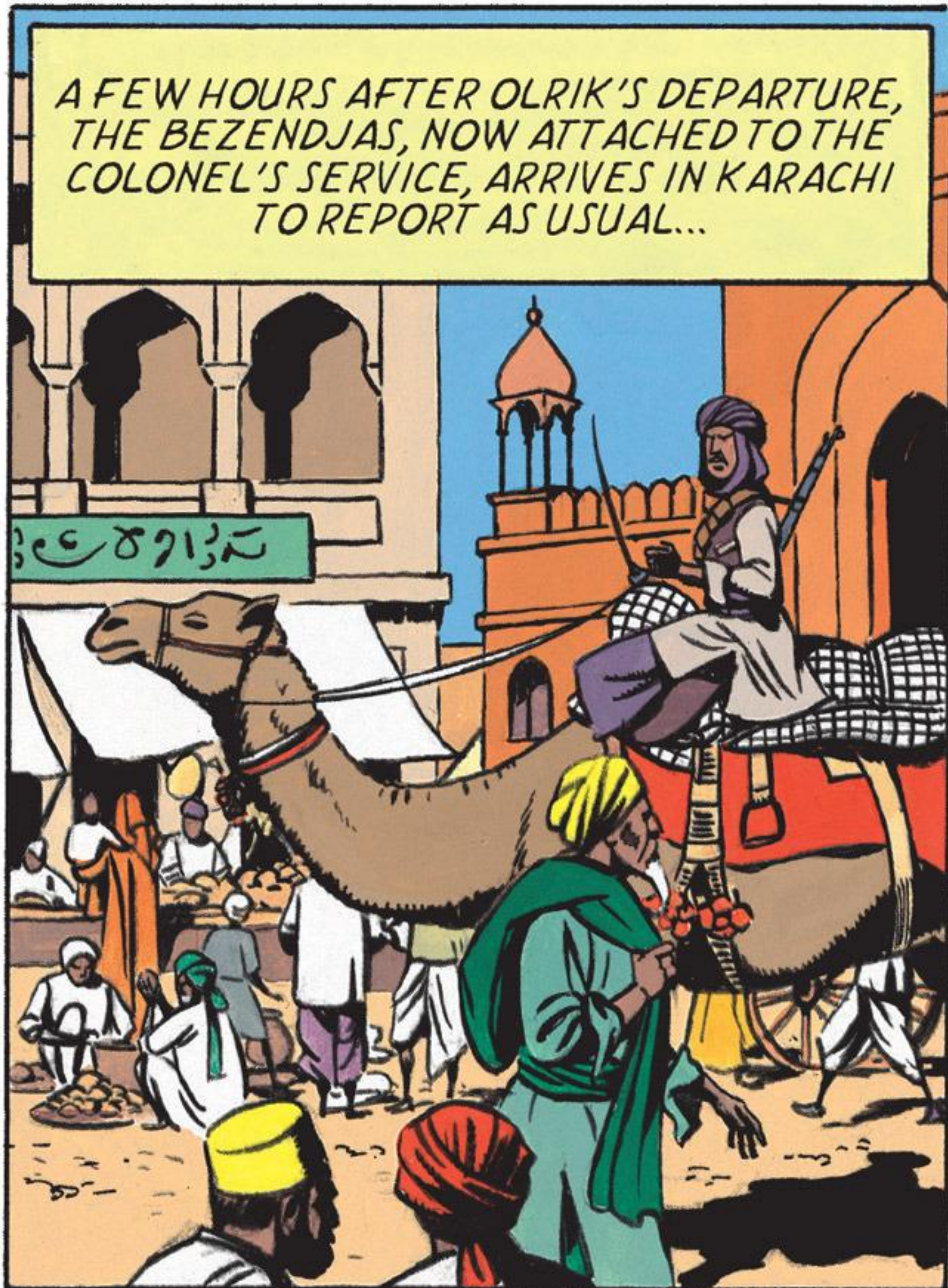
All right!... I'll order the S2 to deploy from Karachi, in case something new occurs there.

AT THE SAME MOMENT, IN THE INTELLIGENCE BUREAU HEADQUARTERS IN KARACHI.

Li, I have to go to Hyderabad urgently because of that sabotage business... Be extra vigilant while I'm gone and, above all, don't leave Sun Fo alone with Mortimer.

You can count on me, Colonel!

SOON, OLRIK'S CAR LEAVES KARACHI ON ITS WAY TO HYDERABAD.



HAVING HEARD THE BEZENDJAS' REPORT, LI IMMEDIATELY CALLS HYDERABAD.

Hello! This is Captain Li. Put me through to Colonel Olrik. Very urgent, an absolute priority!

...impossible, Captain, the colonel just left for Larkana... Along the railway line... A messenger? Certainly... Very well... I've got it.

There. The colonel will be warned in a few hours. In the meantime, you, Lieutenant, have the entire residence searched and double the guard. As for you, Bezendjas, gather the native servants and grill them.

I'm on the case.

Very well.

And now, let's hope Olrik hurries!

AT DAWN, OLRIK IS AT THE SCENE OF THE SABOTAGE, INVESTIGATING.

So, Colonel, what do you think?

...Clearly the work of a professional! Still, we'll have to make an example of somebody...

Right! Shoot that lot over there. It'll make the others think twice...

JUST THEN, AN ARMoured RAIL VEHICLE ARRIVES AT TOP SPEED.

Colonel Olrik? Urgent message for you.

Give it here.

!

My car, straightaway, and then on to Karachi by the shortest way possible!

Follow my instructions to the letter, Major. Accelerate the repairs on the railway and, most important, keep a firm hand on the natives...

Safe return, Colonel.

WITH THAT, OLRIK'S CAR RACES AWAY.

BUT A FEW MILES AHEAD...

Well? What's going on?

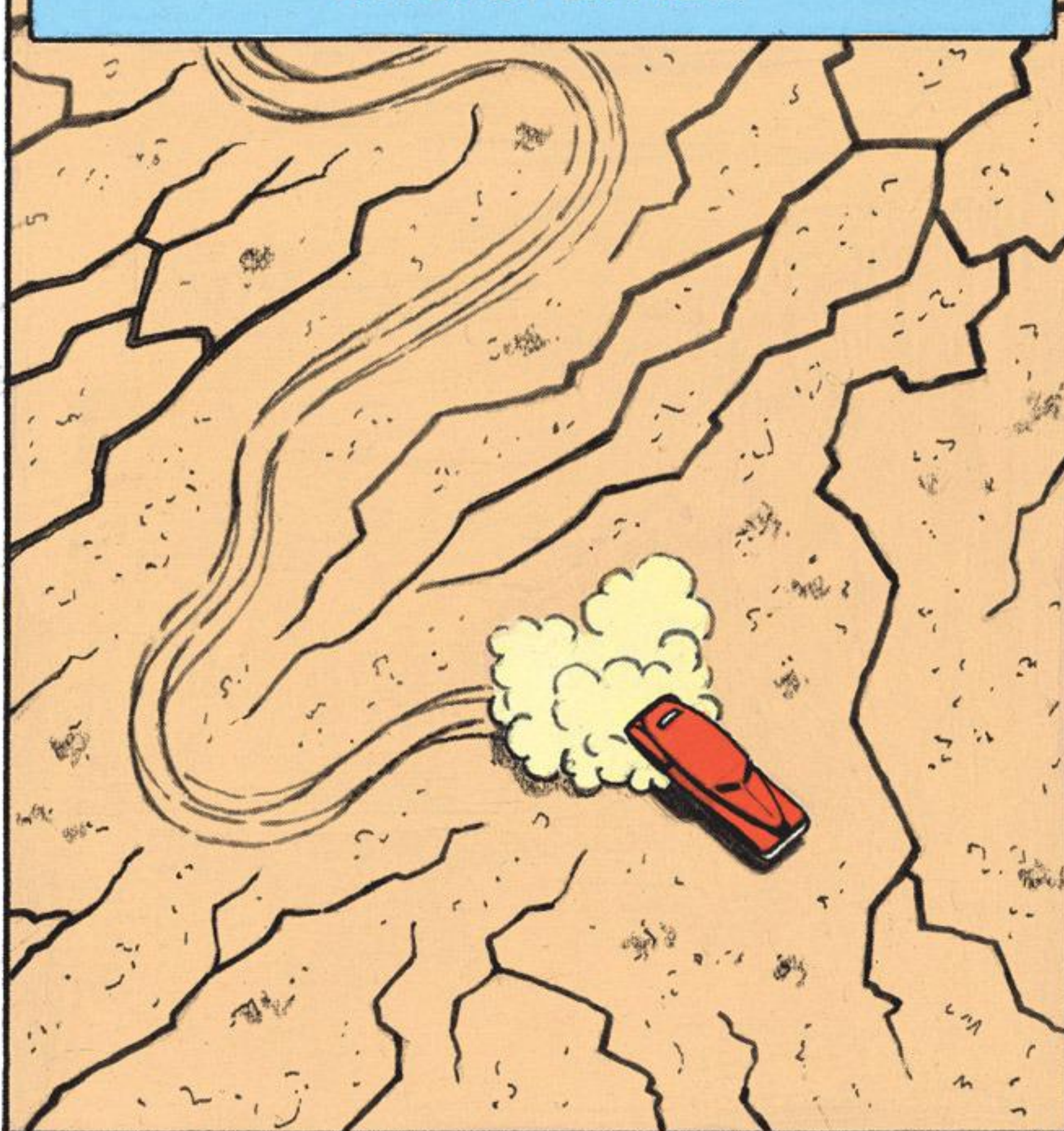
OLRIK'S CAR HAS JUST PASSED THROUGH DADU WHEN A GAPING CRACK SPLITS THE ROAD AHEAD.

It's very common in this season, Colonel. The only thing to do is bypass it.

By thunder! What a waste of time. Oh, well... Go ahead!

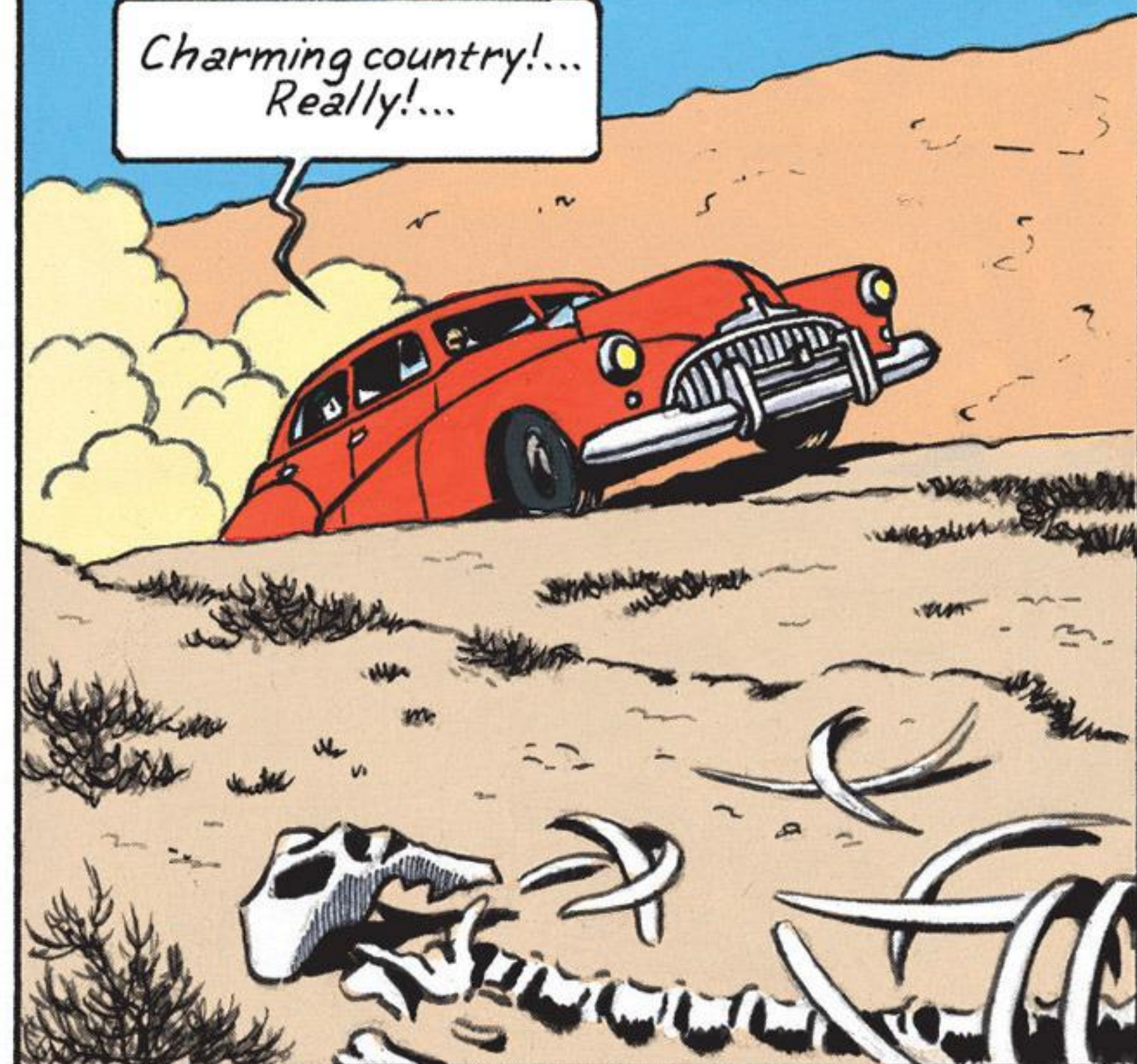


BUT THE DIVERSION LEADS TO OTHER CRACKS, AND DETOUR AFTER DETOUR TAKES THE CAR FURTHER AND FURTHER FROM THE ROAD, LOSING DIRECTION AND DISTANCE LITTLE BY LITTLE...



ONCE OFF THE TRAIL, THOUGH, THERE'S NO GOING BACK, AND NOW THE CAR MUST FACE A NEW ENEMY: SAND...

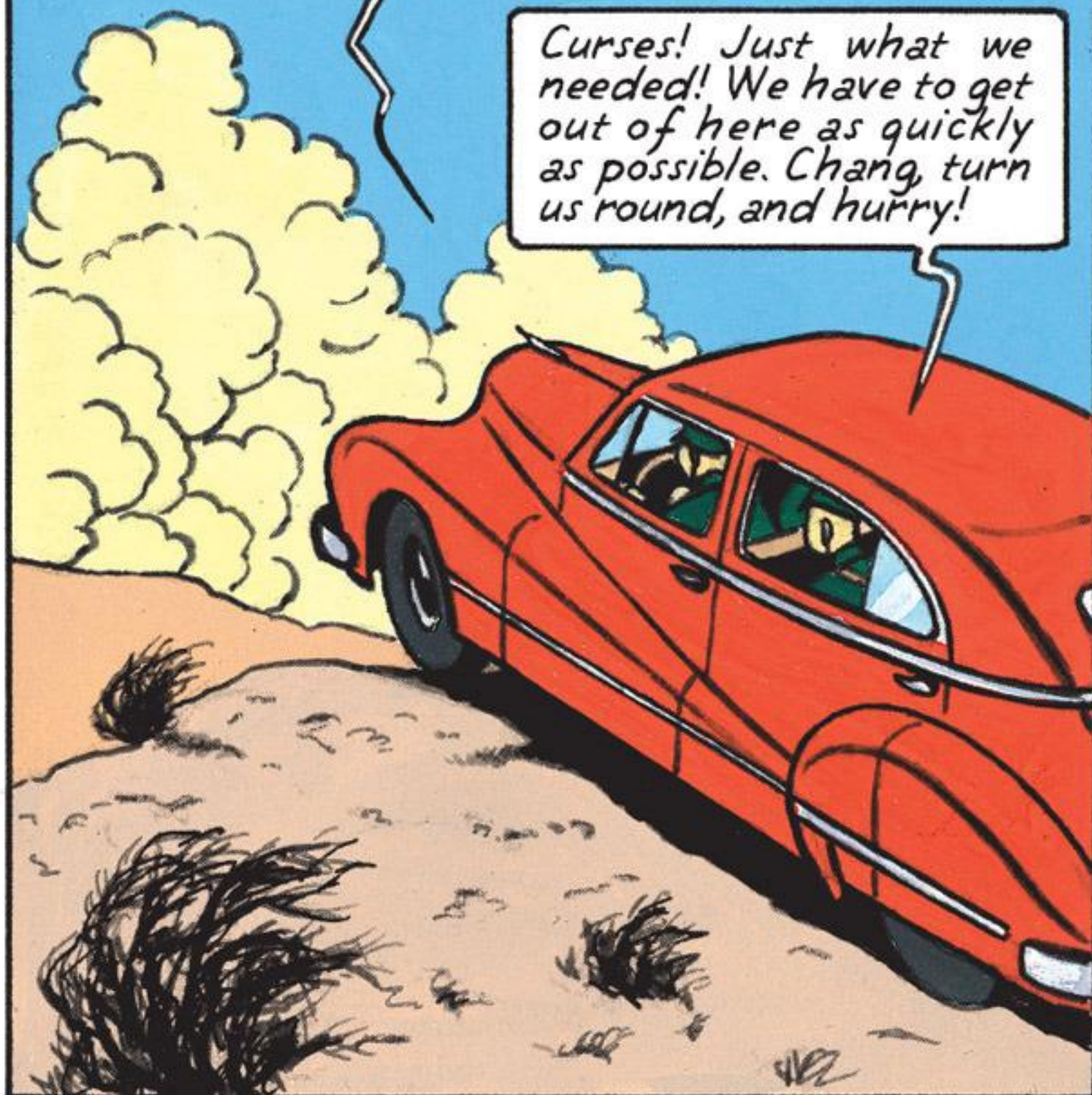
Charming country!... Really!...



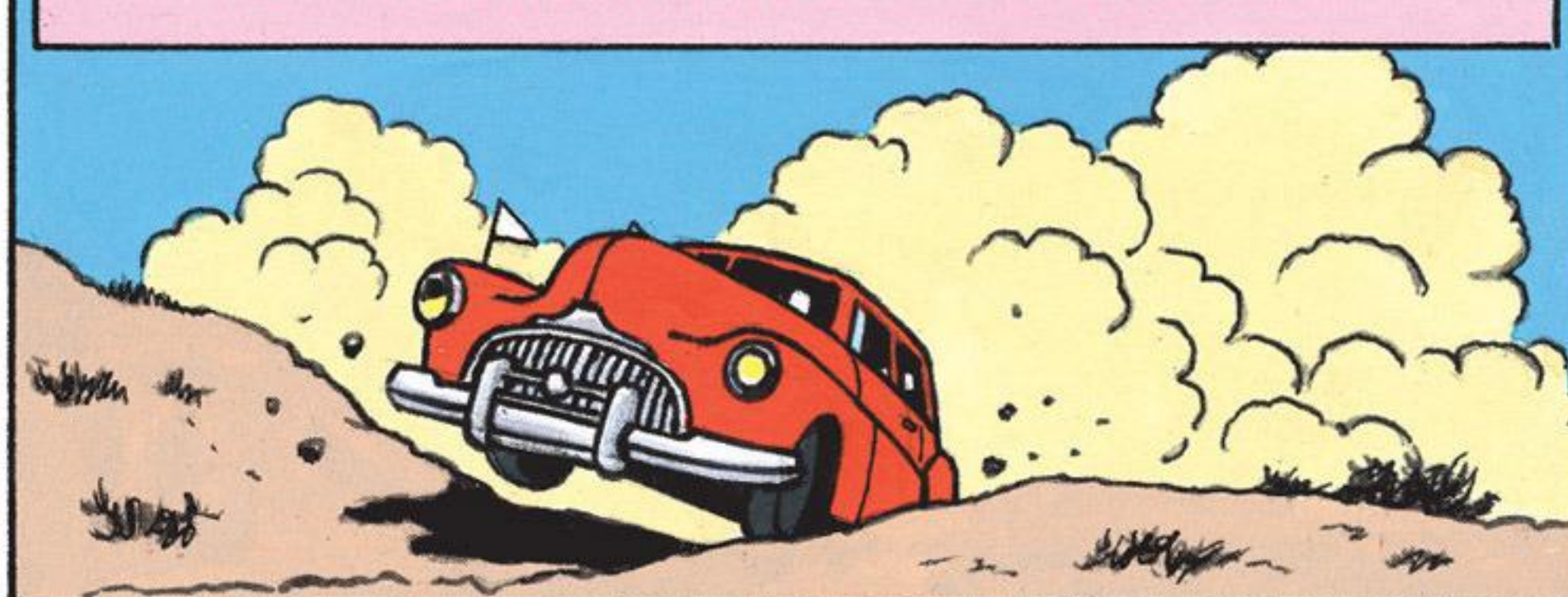
BUT SUDDENLY A STRANGE, COPPER-COLOURED CLOUD APPEARS ON THE HORIZON.

Colonel, it's the monsoon! It's coming straight for us!

Curses! Just what we needed! We have to get out of here as quickly as possible. Chang, turn us round, and hurry!



THE CAR RUSHES FORWARD, BUT THE HILLY, SOFT TERRAIN HINDERS ITS PROGRESS...



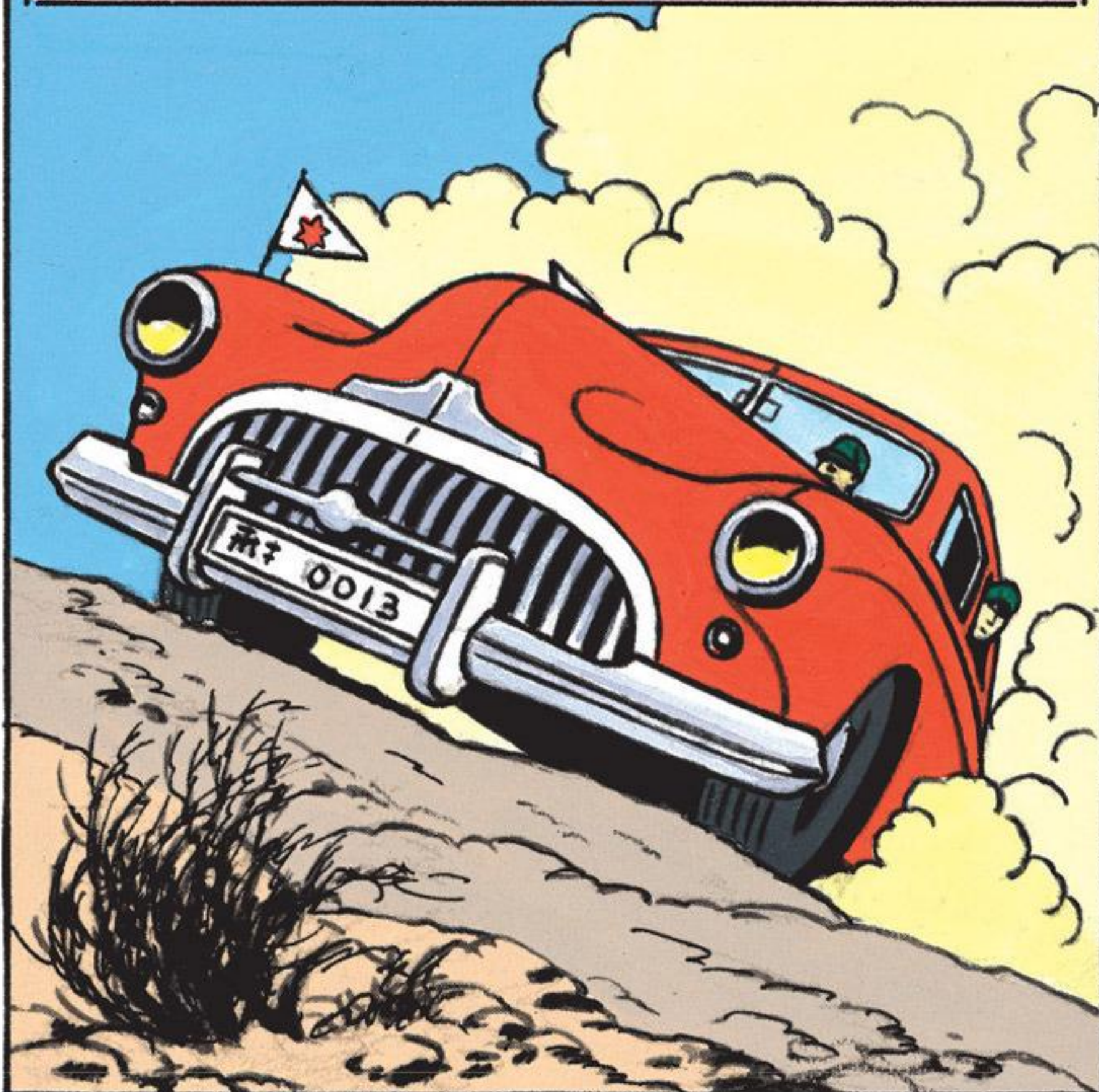
SUDDENLY THE DRIVER STRAIGHTENS UP AT THE WHEEL AS A LARGE HOLLOW OPENS UP JUST IN FRONT OF HIM...



THE MAN DOESN'T HESITATE. HE PUTS HIS FOOT DOWN, TRYING TO ACQUIRE ENOUGH SPEED IN THE DOWNWARD RUSH TO MAKE IT BACK UP THE OTHER SIDE...



THE TYRES BITE, DIG INTO THE GROUND... BUT UNFORTUNATELY, A FEW YARDS FROM THE TOP, THE WHEELS START SPINNING... THE CAR WON'T BUDGE.



HURRIEDLY, THE MEN CUT BRANCHES FROM NEARBY BUSHES, FASHIONING THEM INTO A SORT OF CRUDE MAT WHICH, ONCE PLACED UNDER THE DRIVING WHEELS, WILL PROVIDE THE TRACTION NEEDED FOR THE LAST LEAP...



TOO LATE! THE MONSOON IS ALREADY UPON THEM, MERCILESSLY SWEEPING THE SLOPE. THE FOUL, CHOKING SAND GETS EVERYWHERE, BURNING THEIR EYES, PARCHING THEIR THROATS...



Inside the car! Hurry!!!...

SAFE INSIDE THE VEHICLE, THE THREE MEN
PUT THEIR HEADS TOGETHER...

*Damnation, Chang! What a stupid idea you
had, cutting across Sonmiani Bay! We're stuck
here without hope of rescue... Is there any
help to be found around here?*

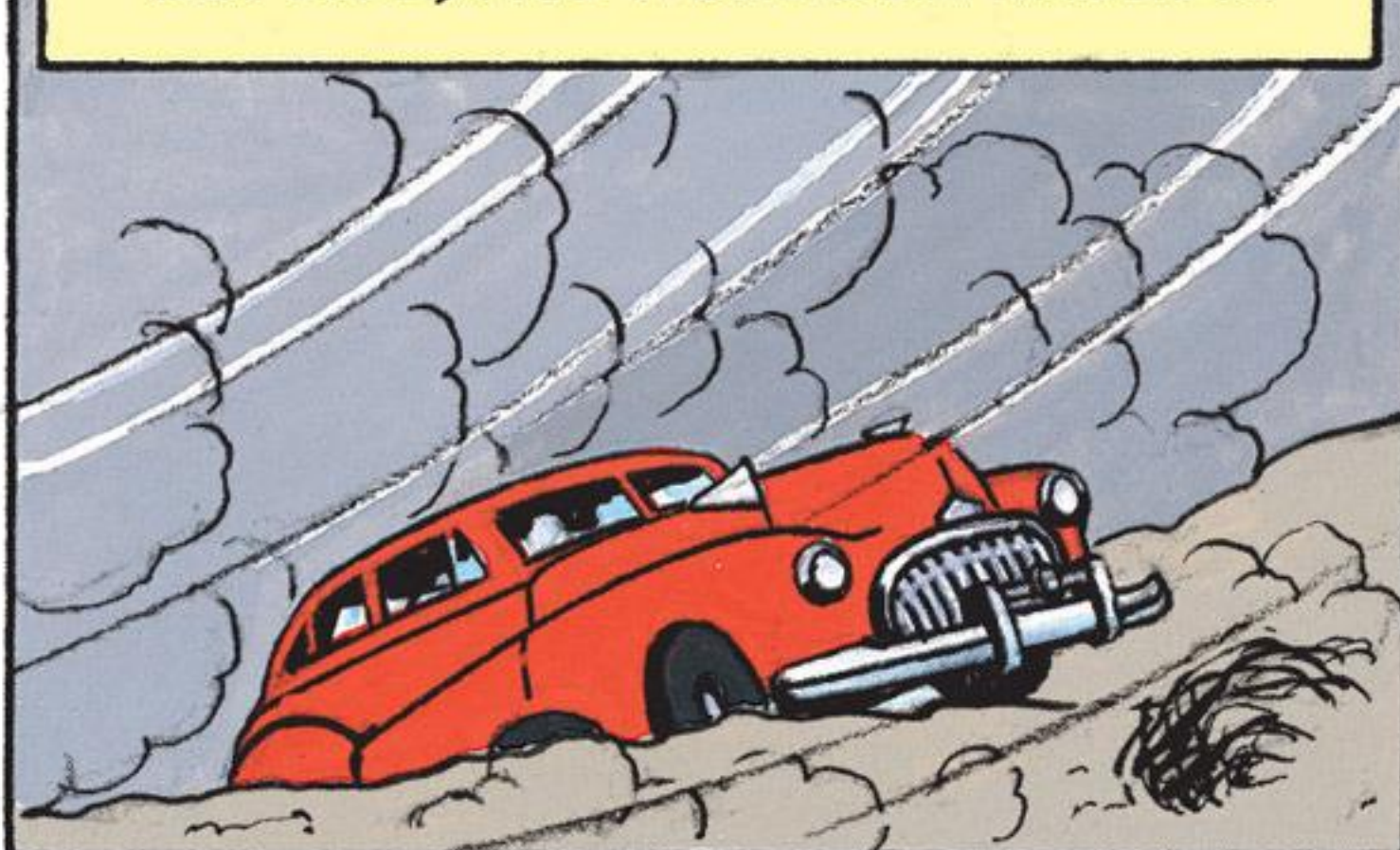
*A small outpost somewhere to the north,
I think... But how can we find it in this
featureless landscape?*



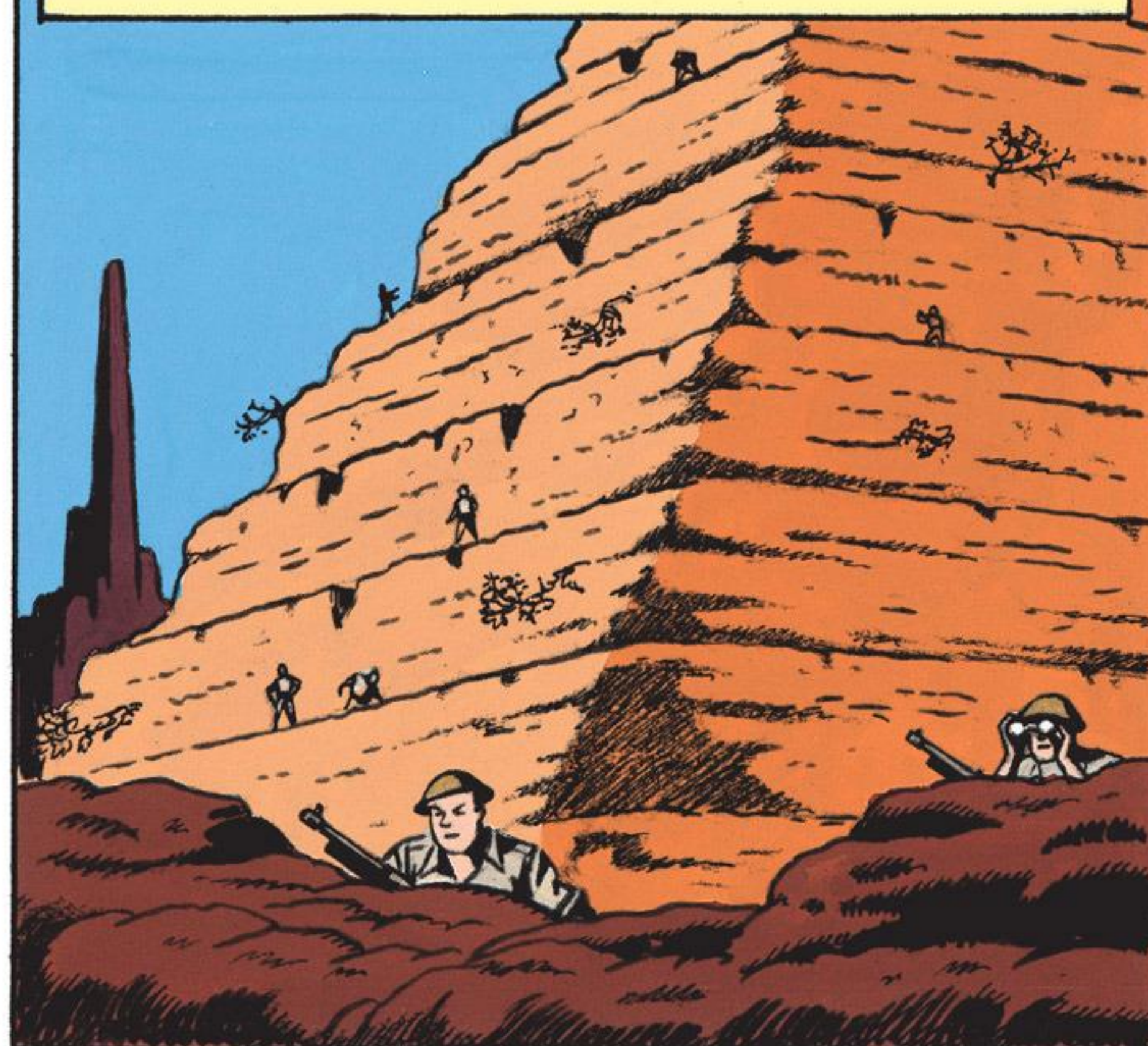
*Enough! At the first sign of a lull,
we set off. Unless by then...*



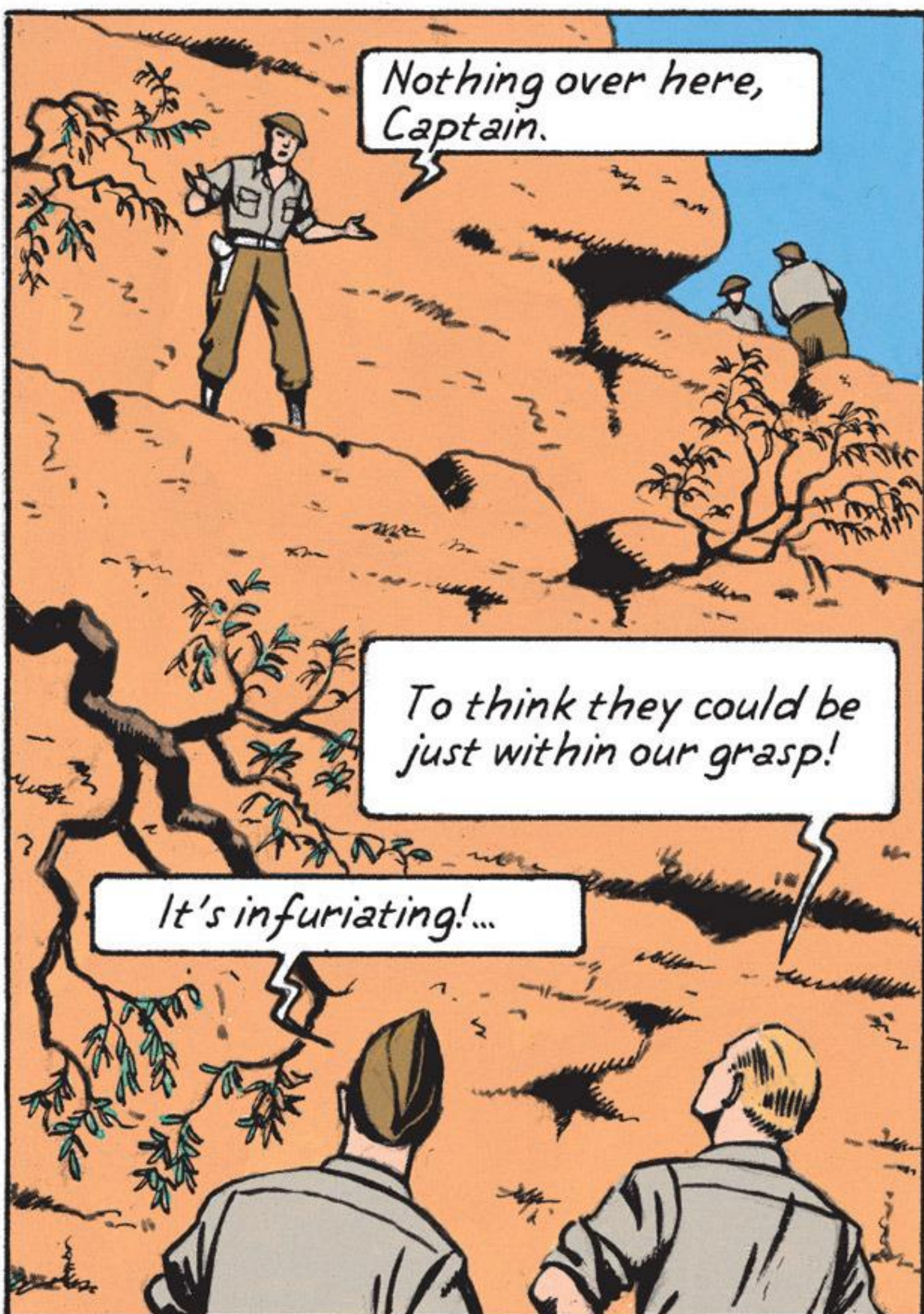
OUTSIDE, THE MONSOON RAGES...



MEANWHILE, ON THE PYRAMID, BLAKE AND
HIS MEN, PROTECTED BY WATCHFUL LOOKOUTS,
HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR THE SWORDFISH
PLANS FOR HOURS ... IN VAIN.



*Nothing over here,
Captain.*



*To think they could be
just within our grasp!*

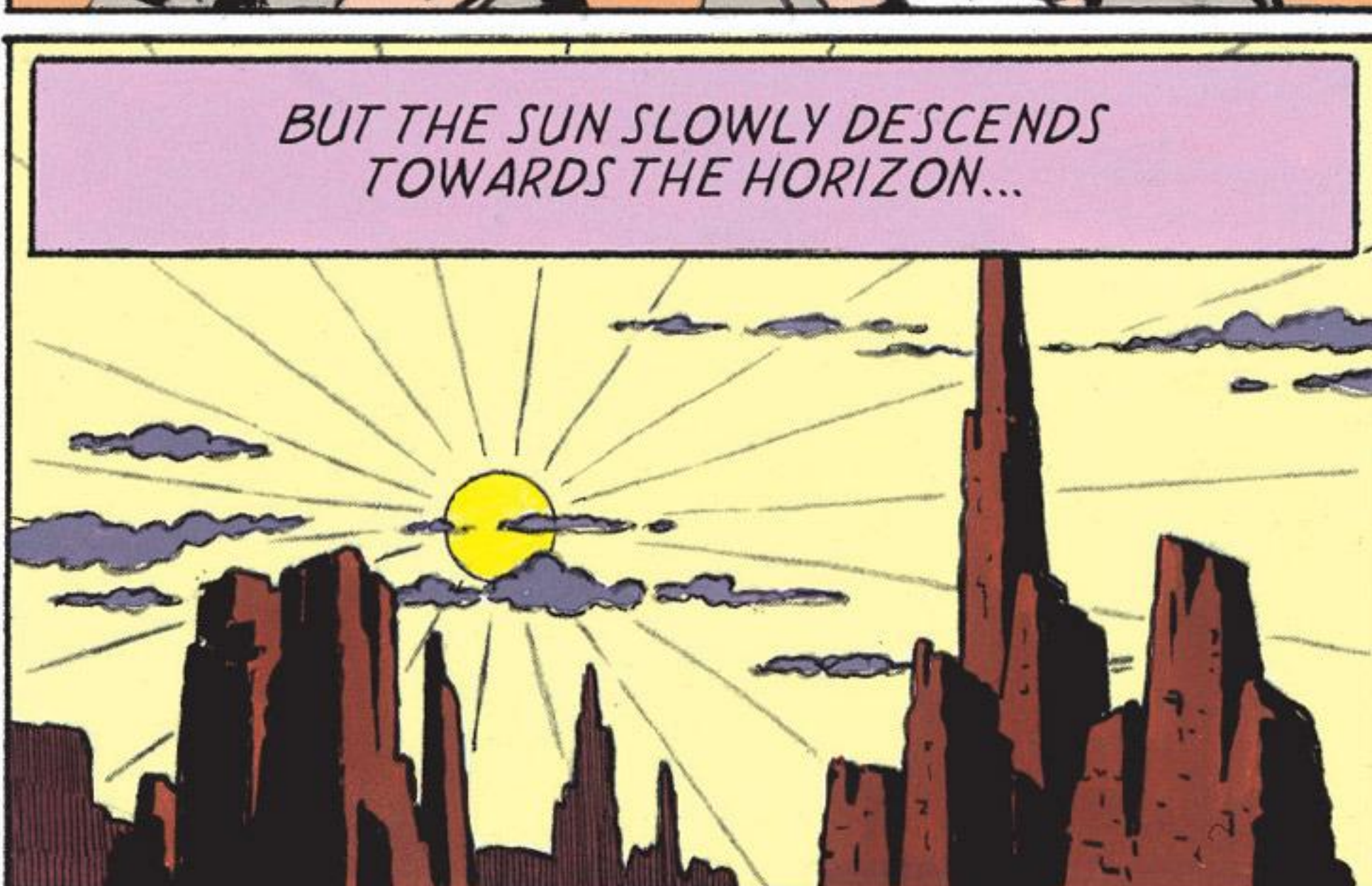
It's infuriating!...

*...And not a cross
in sight!*

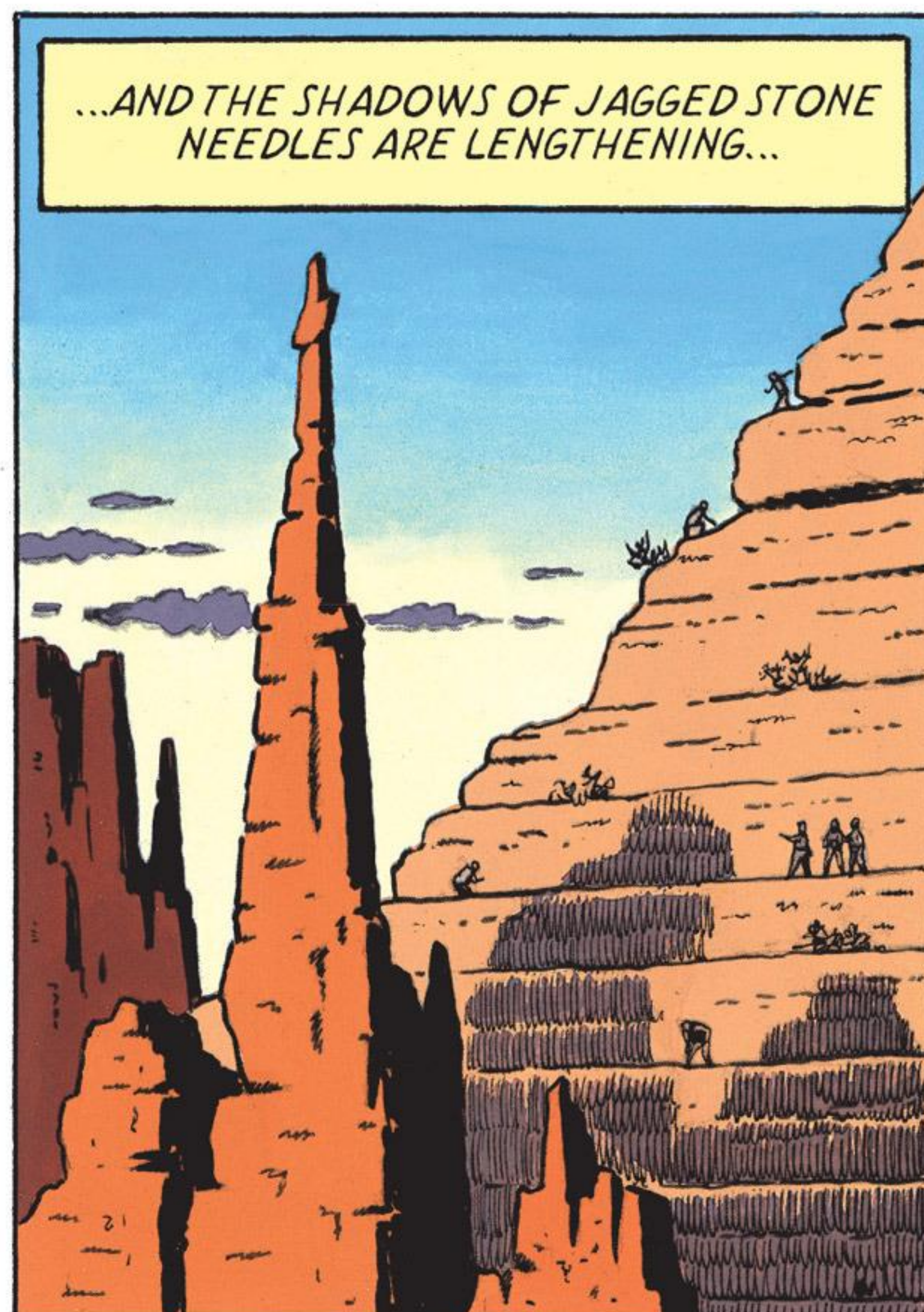


*Yet it's clearly part of
the cryptogram...*

BUT THE SUN SLOWLY DESCENDS
TOWARDS THE HORIZON...

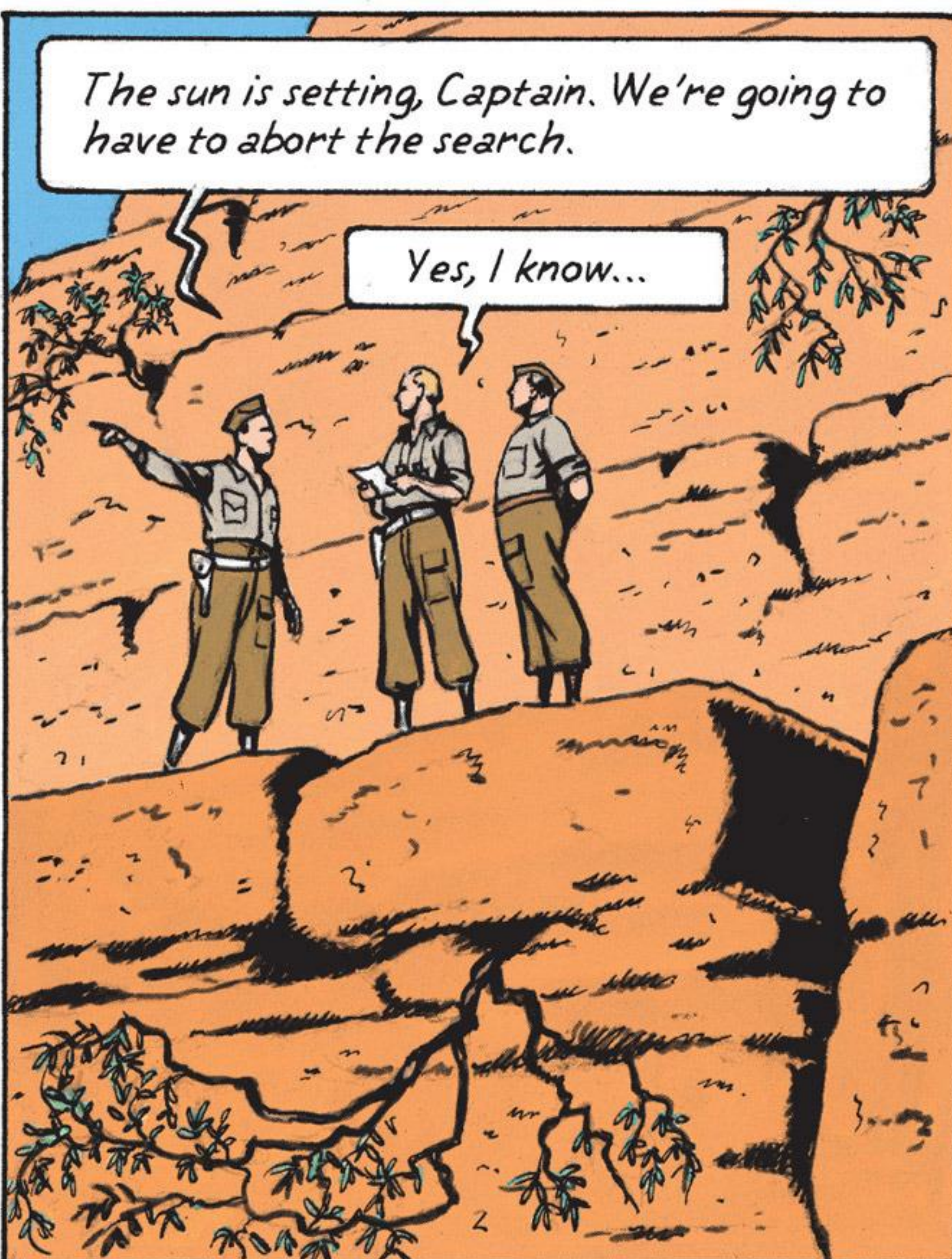


...AND THE SHADOWS OF JAGGED STONE
NEEDLES ARE LENGTHENING...



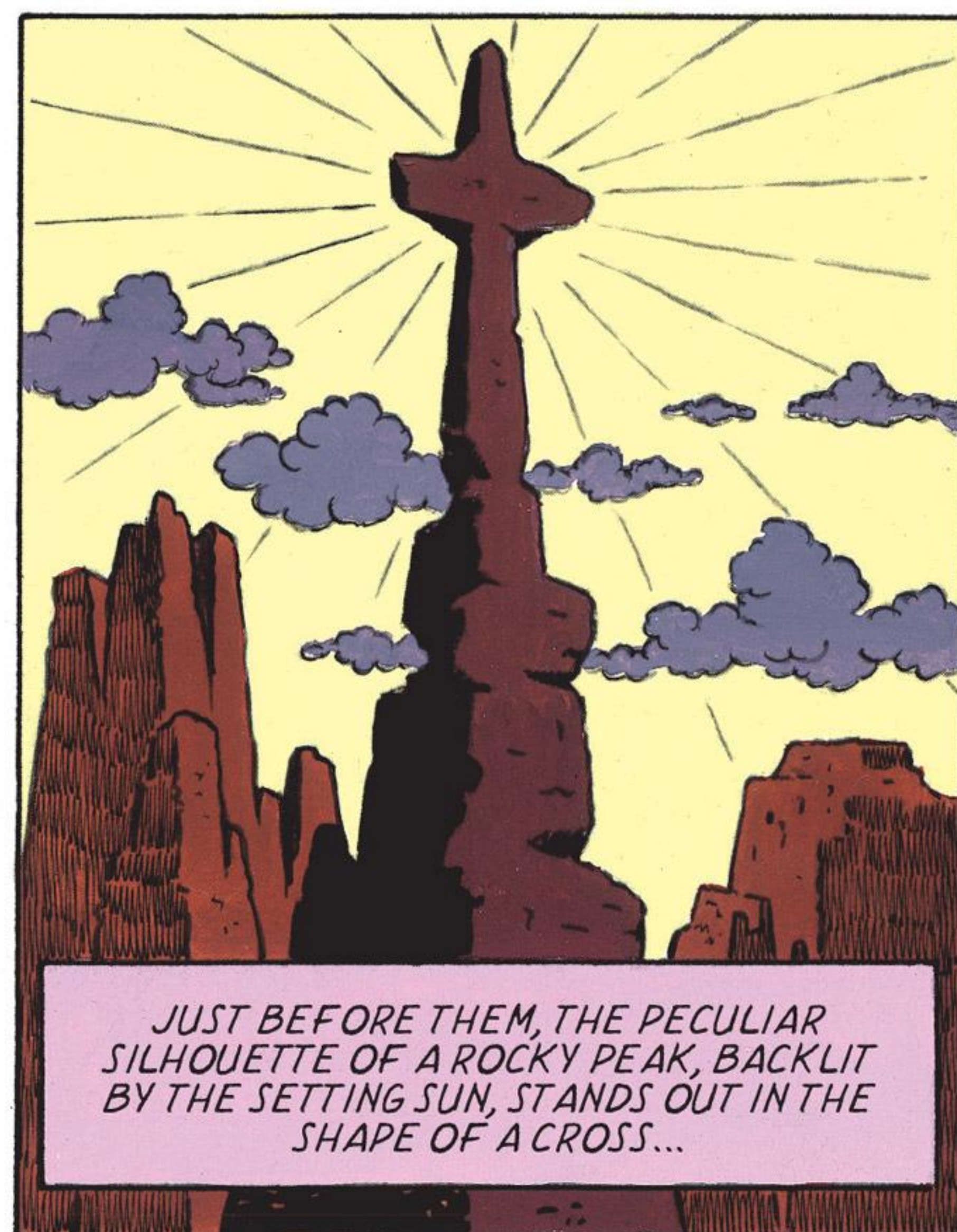
*The sun is setting, Captain. We're going to
have to abort the search.*

Yes, I know...



BUT SUDDENLY, BLAKE LETS OUT
A TRIUMPHANT CRY AND POINTS...

There! Look!!!



JUST BEFORE THEM, THE PECULIAR
SILHOUETTE OF A ROCKY PEAK, BACKLIT
BY THE SETTING SUN, STANDS OUT IN THE
SHAPE OF A CROSS...

There's no doubt! Surrounded on the pyramid, Mortimer must have noticed that peak at the last minute, when he'd already recovered the documents. Struck by its shape, he'll have hidden the plans in a crack that must be facing the cross, most likely on a level with the intersection of the two arms.

Well, I'll be!...

Now I can understand the cryptogram: 'Swordfish plans - hidden on the SW face of the pyramid - level with the cross!...'

I think we're really warm this time, boys!... The area that's facing the cross must be explored inch by inch! Let's get to work!

THE SEARCH RESUMES WITH RENEWED ENTHUSIASM.

We must hurry! It's getting dark.

BLAKE, WHO'S JOINED THE SEARCH TEAMS, SUDDENLY SPOTS A NARROW CRACK, BARELY VISIBLE AMONG THE ROOTS OF A SHRUB.

HEART POUNDING, HE THRUSTS HIS HAND INSIDE...

Hurrah! I have them!!!

FULL OF CURIOSITY, THE WHOLE TEAM GATHERS AROUND BLAKE.

So, Captain, are these the Swordfish plans?

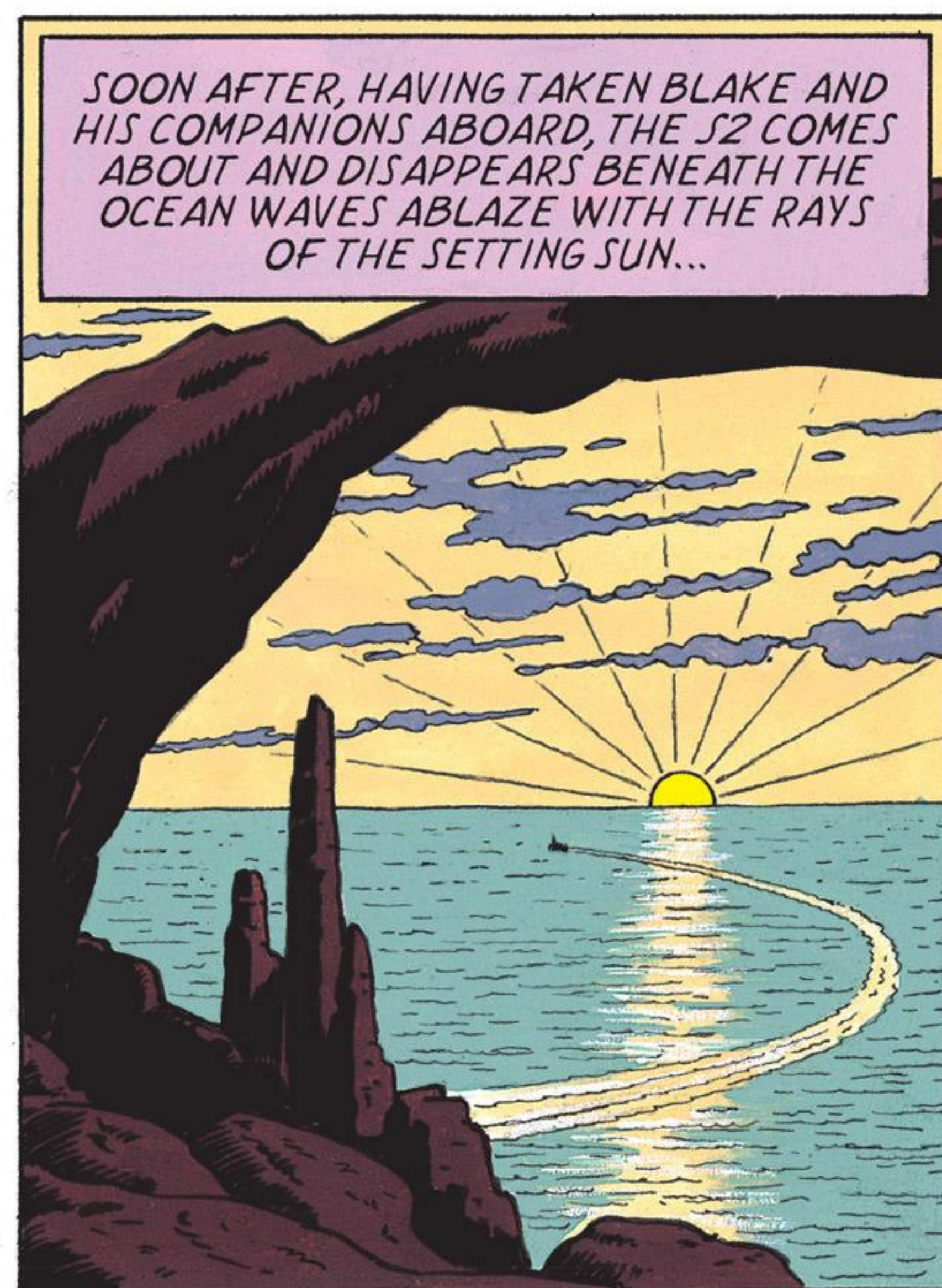
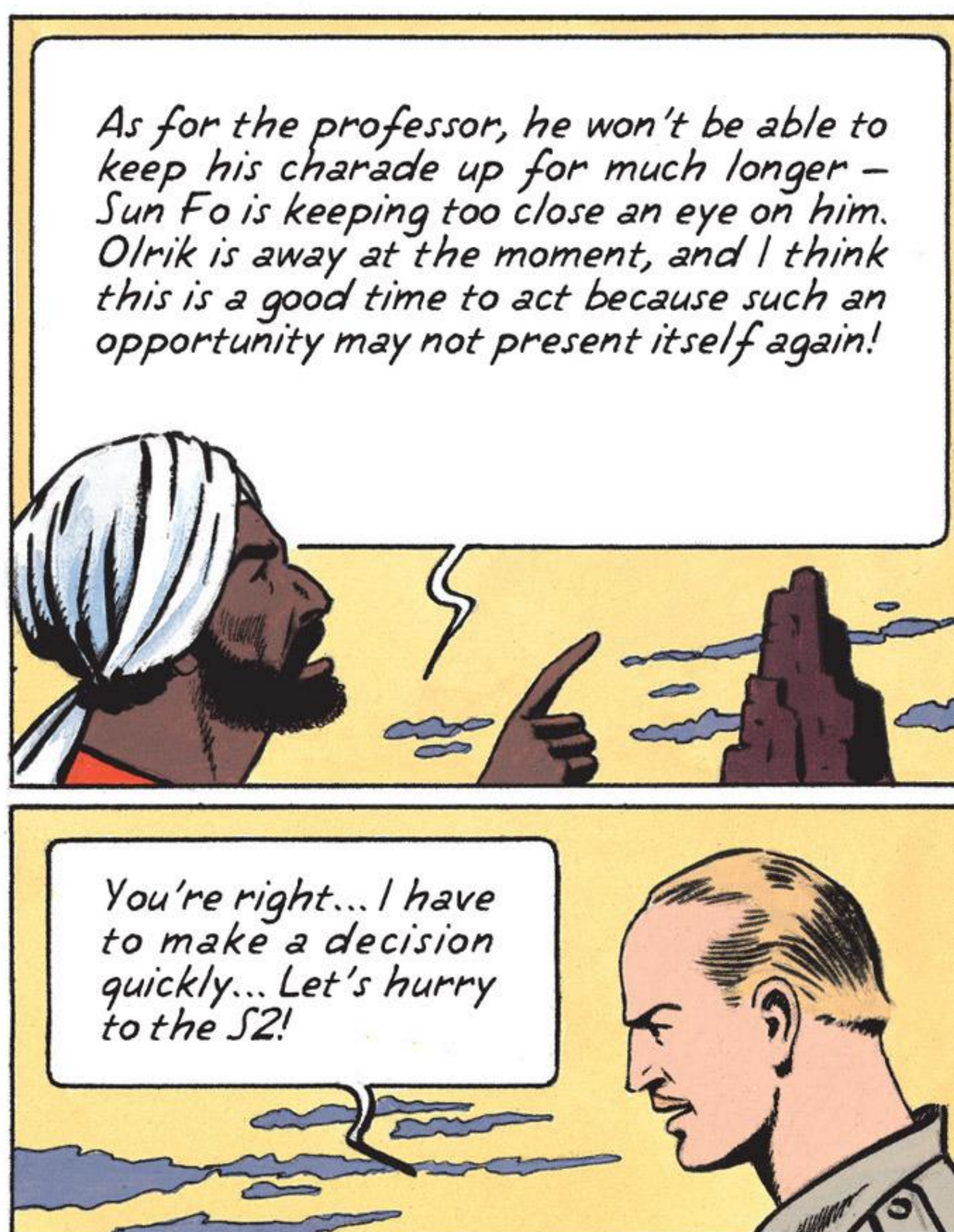
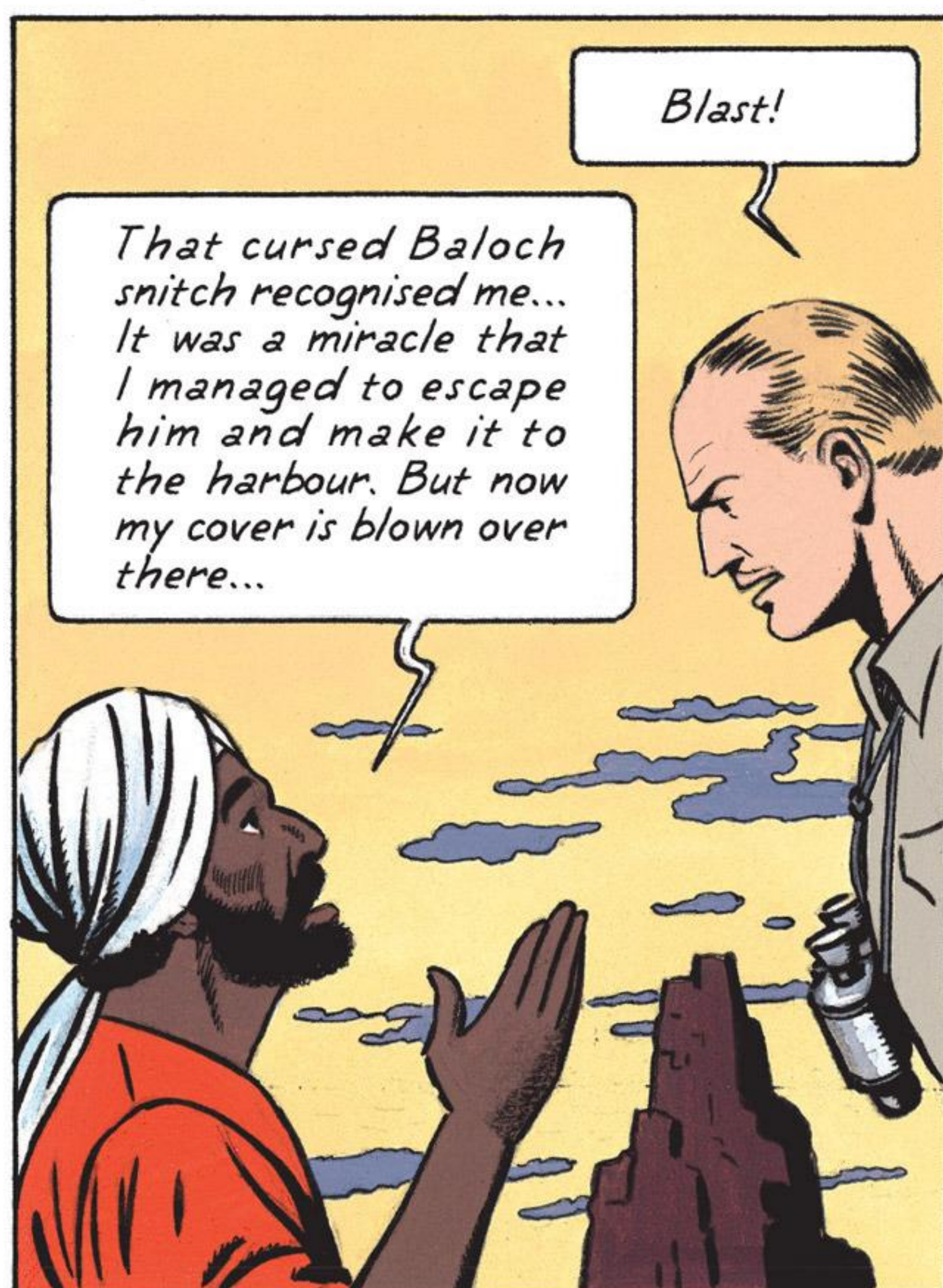
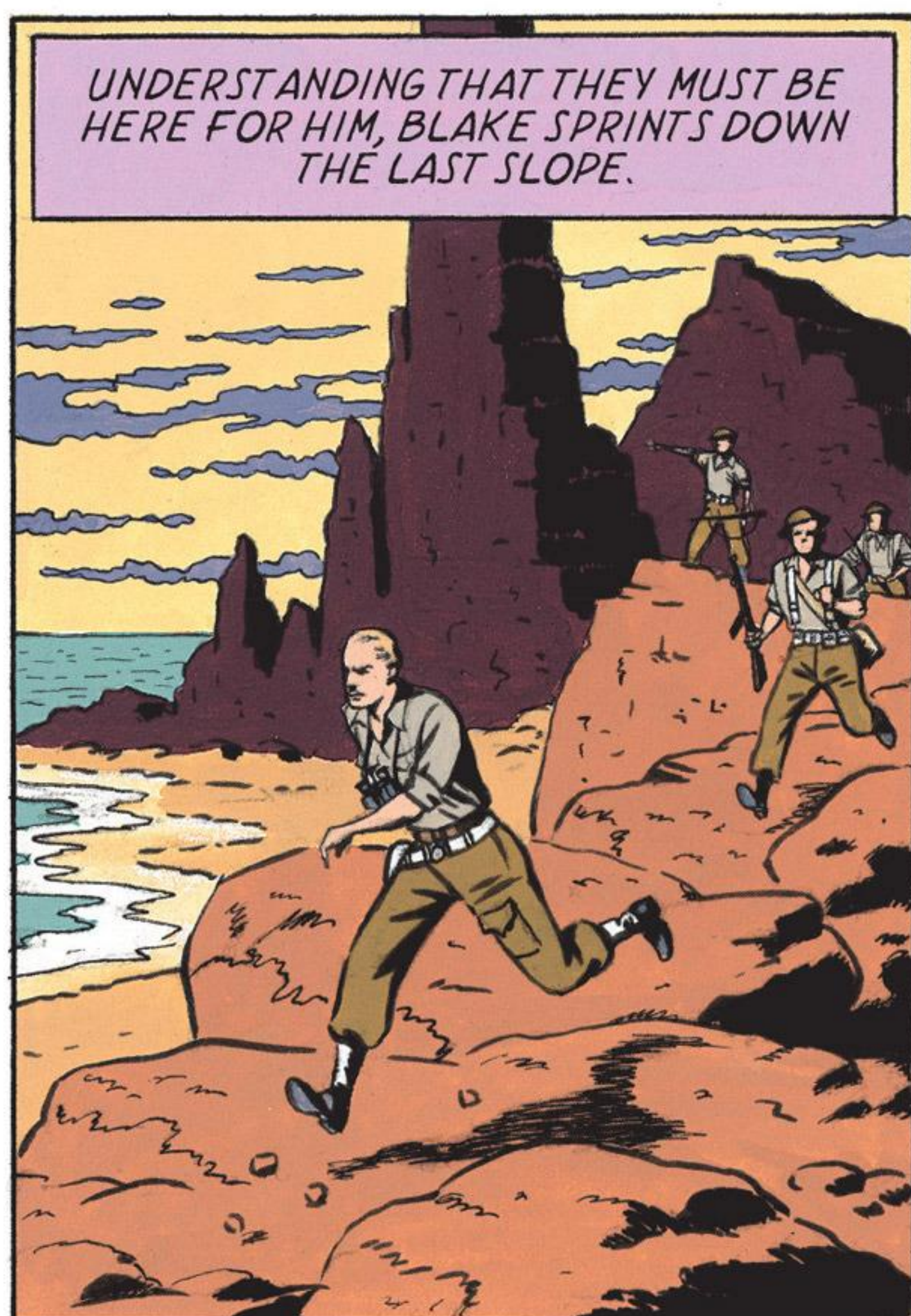
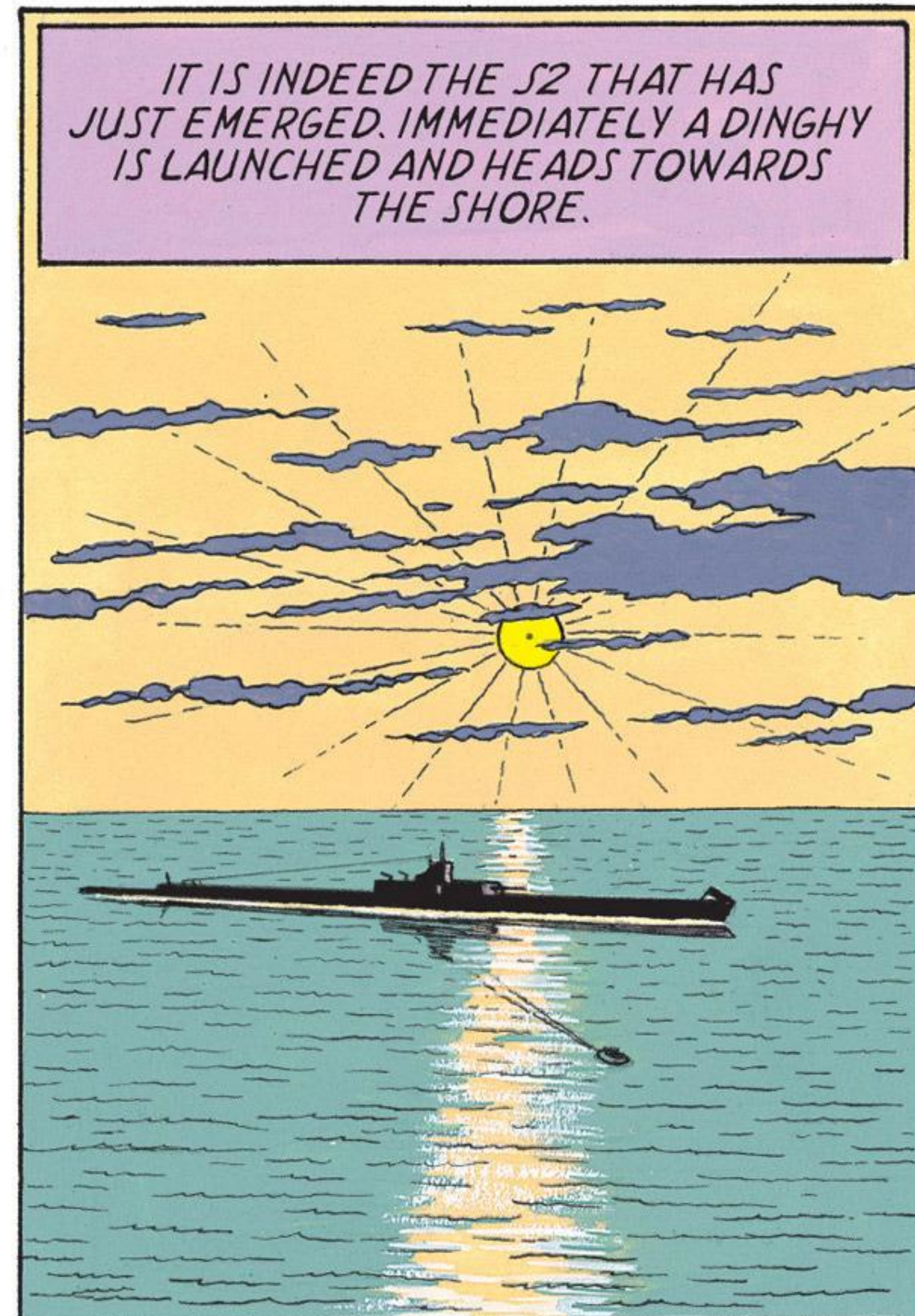
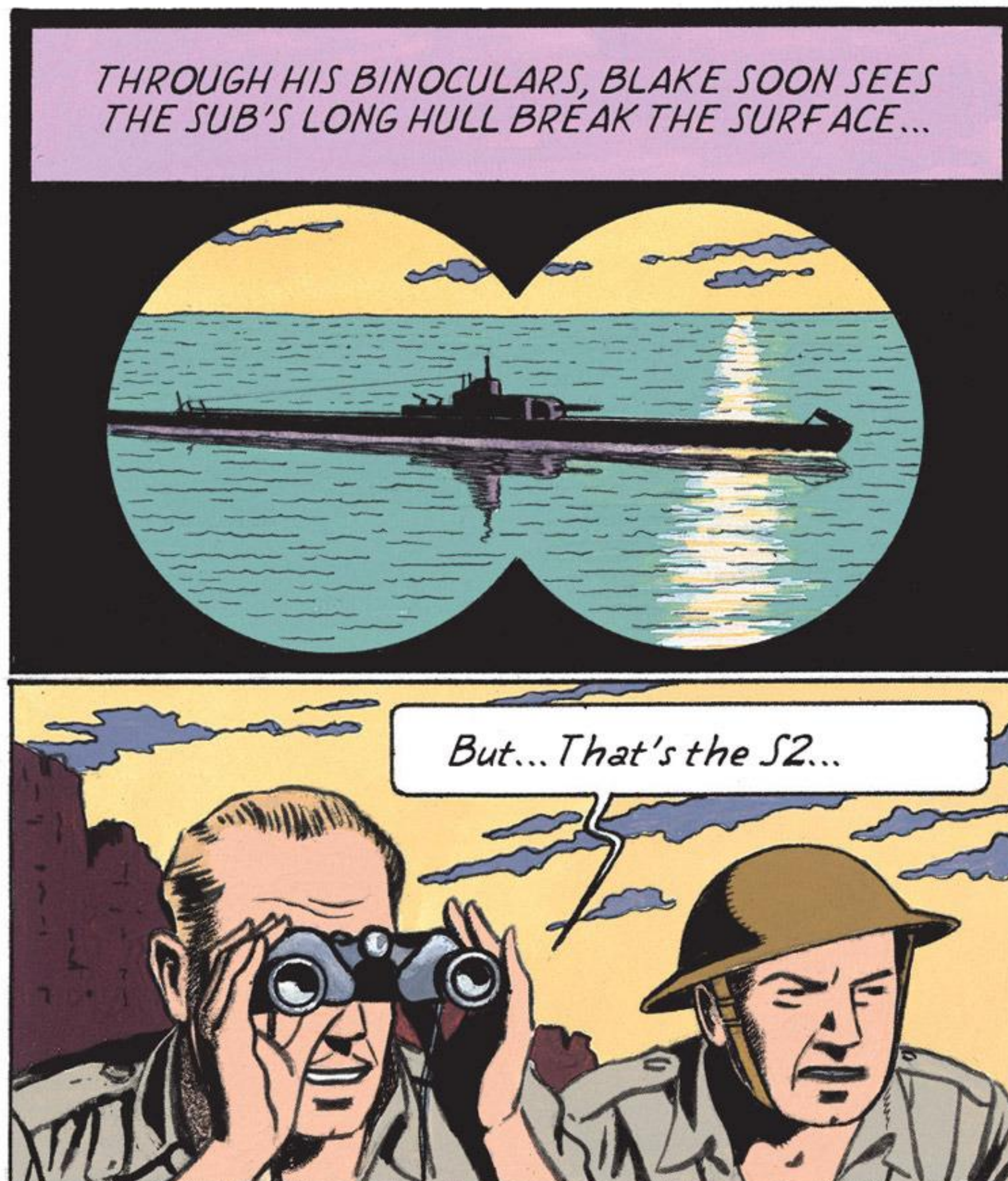
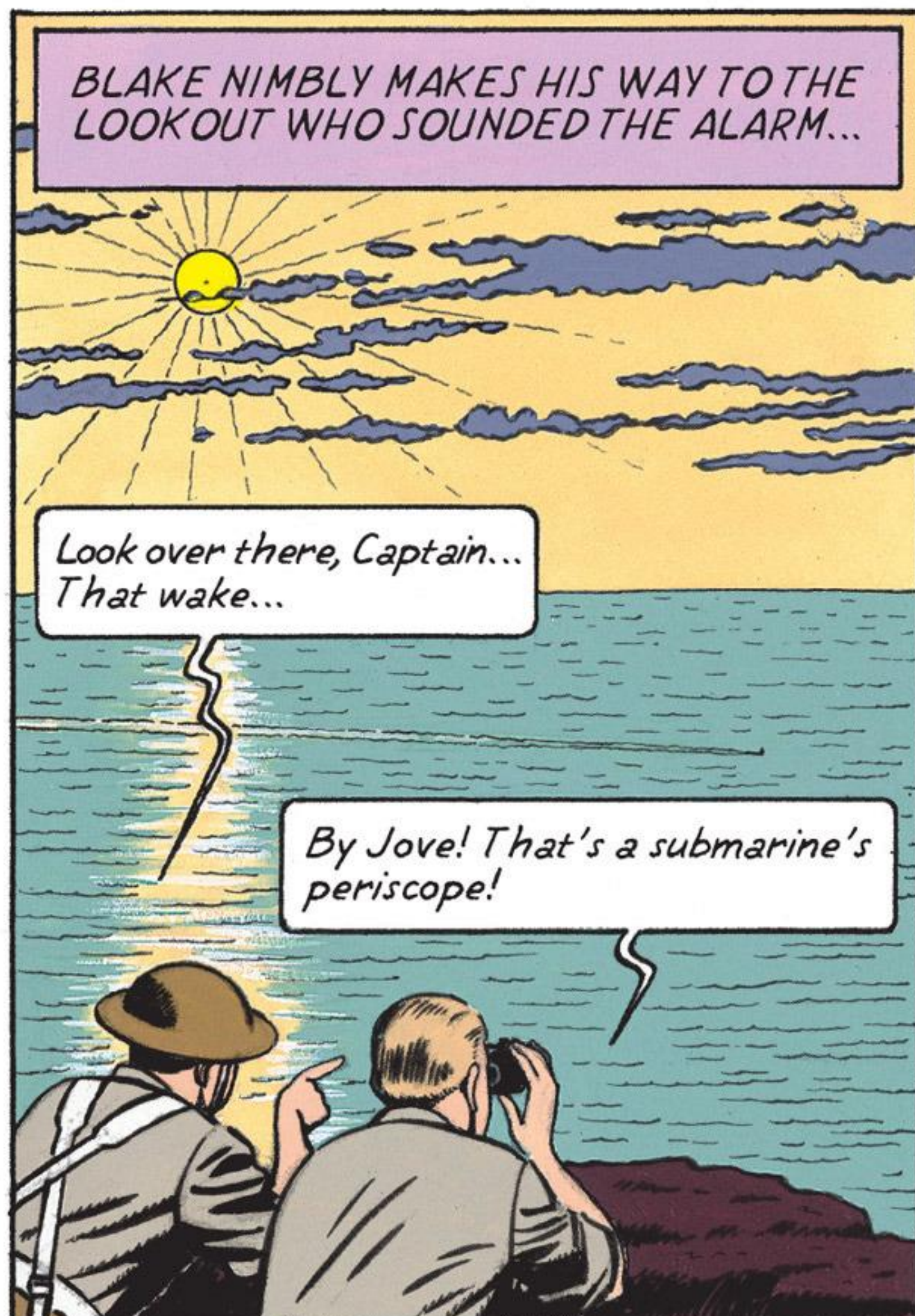
Yes, my friends, and now the Imperials had better watch out. Things are hotting up for them!

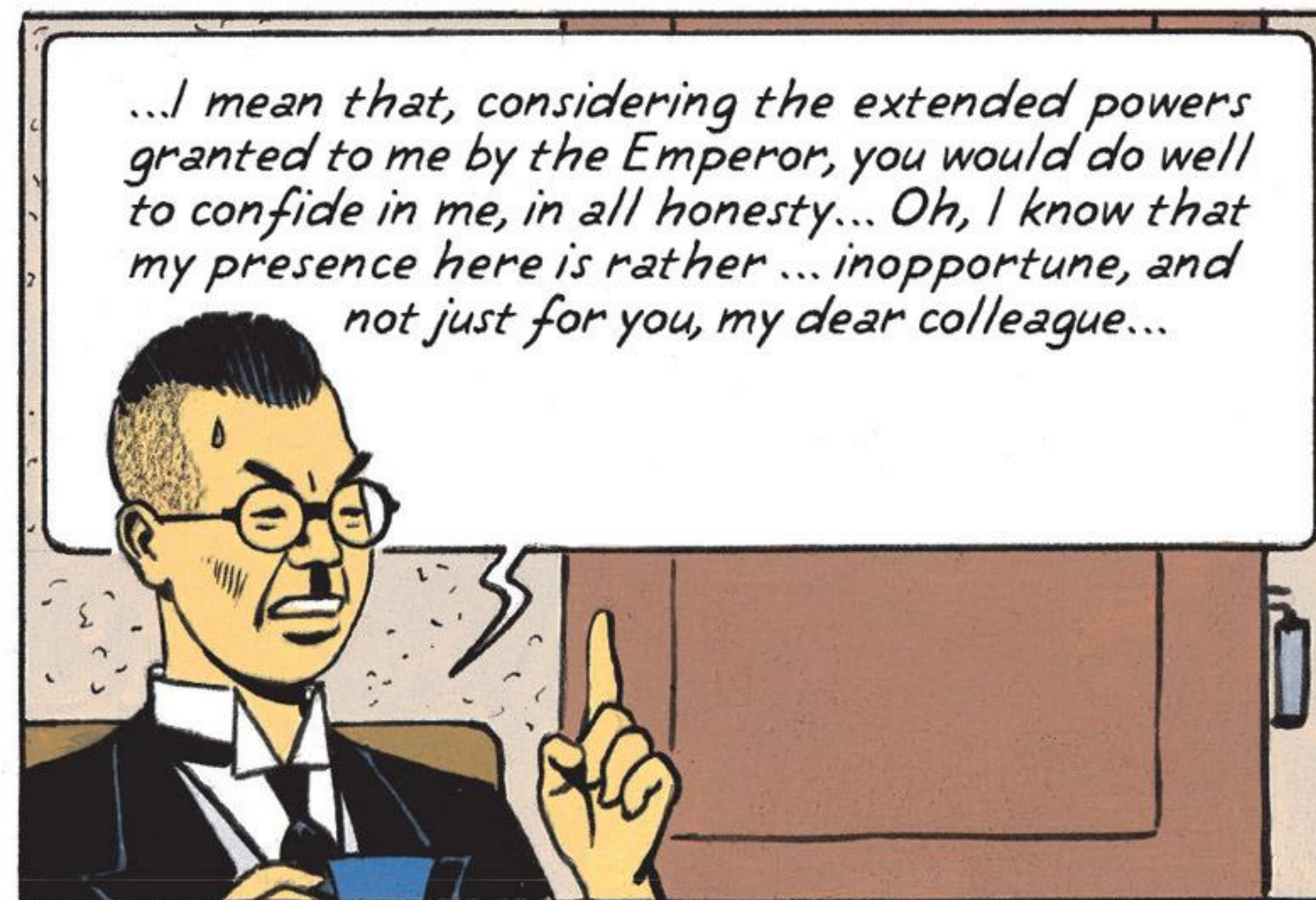
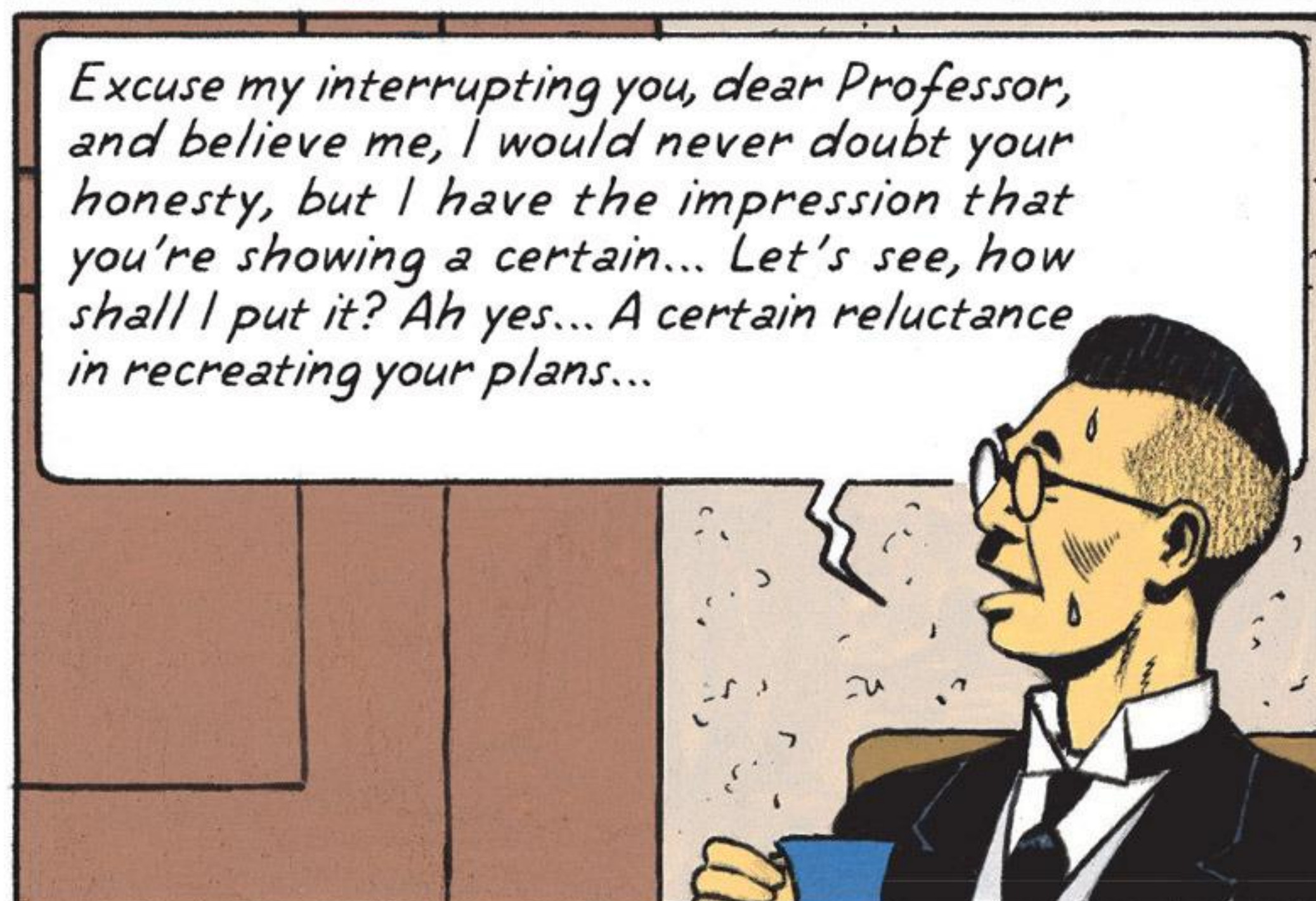
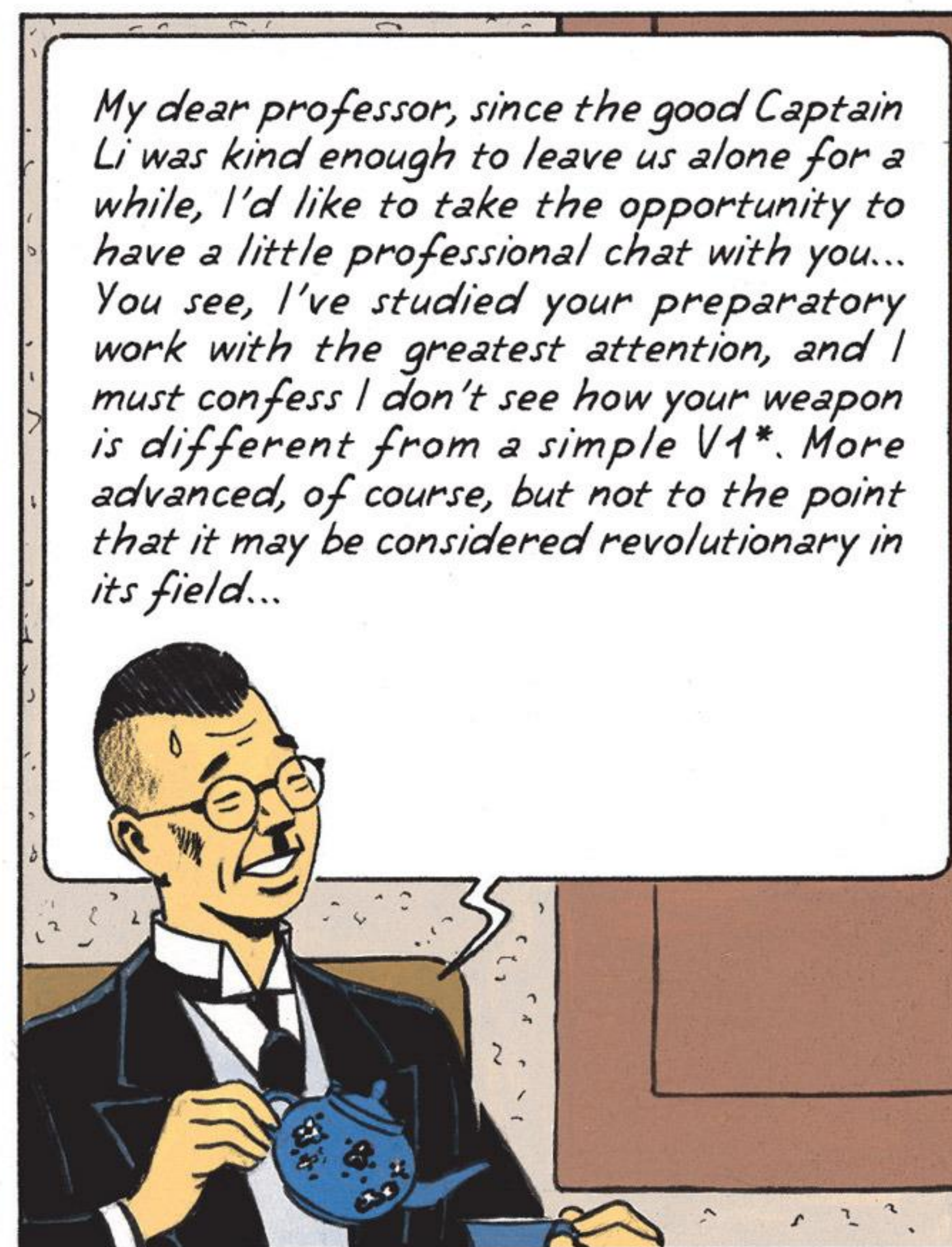
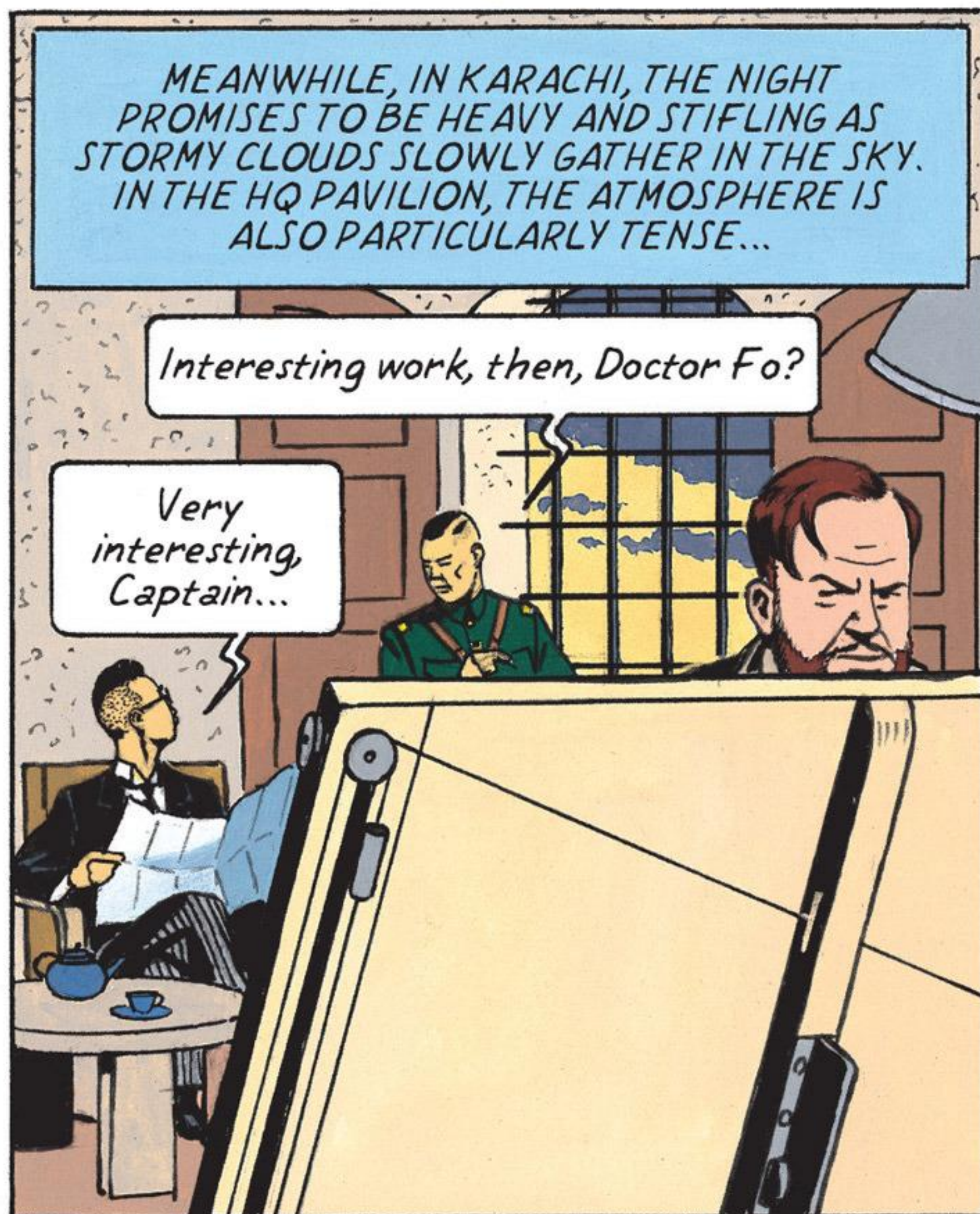
BLAKE HAVING GIVEN THE SIGNAL OF DEPARTURE, THE MEN DASH DOWNHILL TOWARDS THE SHORE...

...WHEN SUDDENLY THE SHRILL WHISTLE OF A LOOKOUT PIERCES THE AIR.

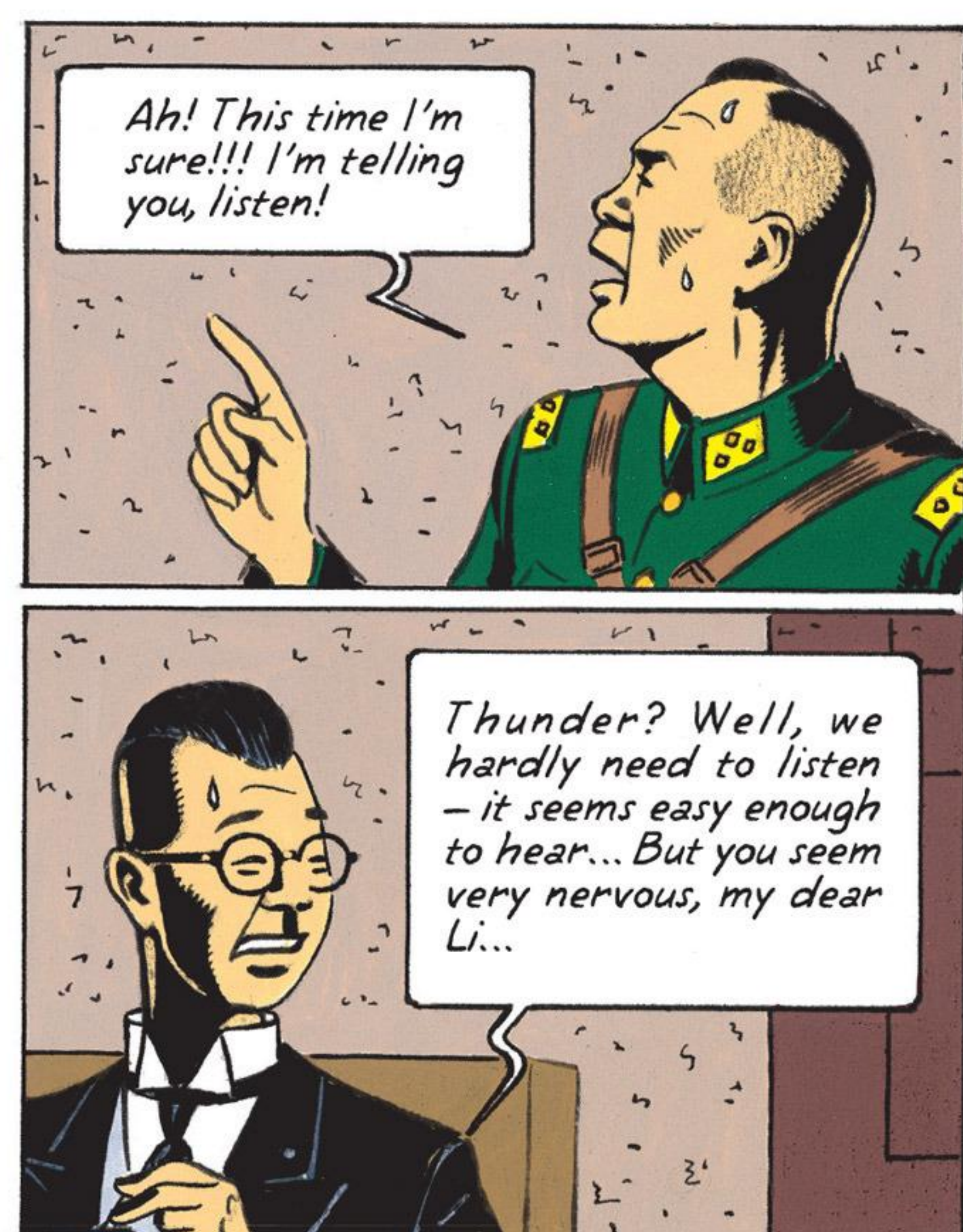
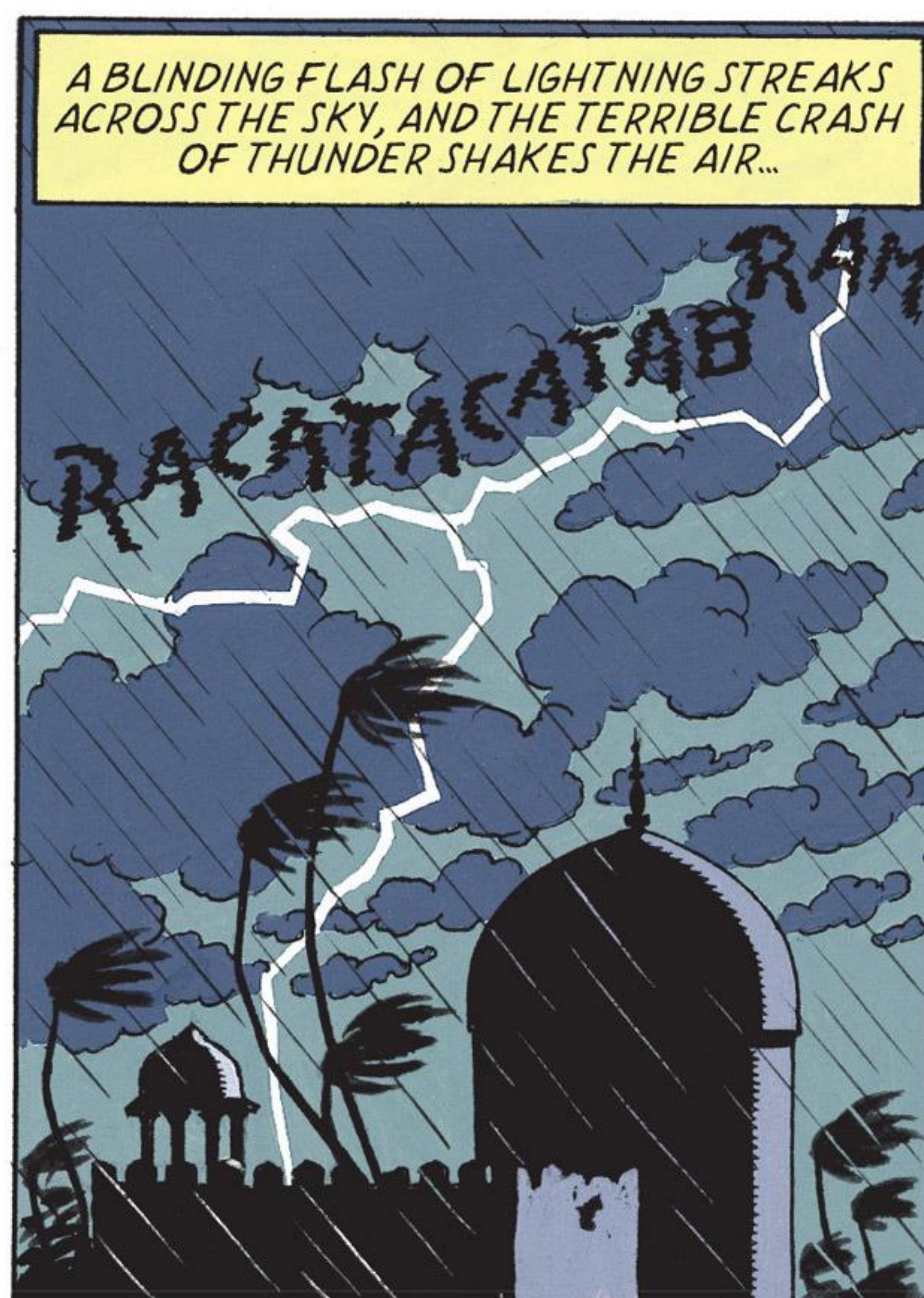
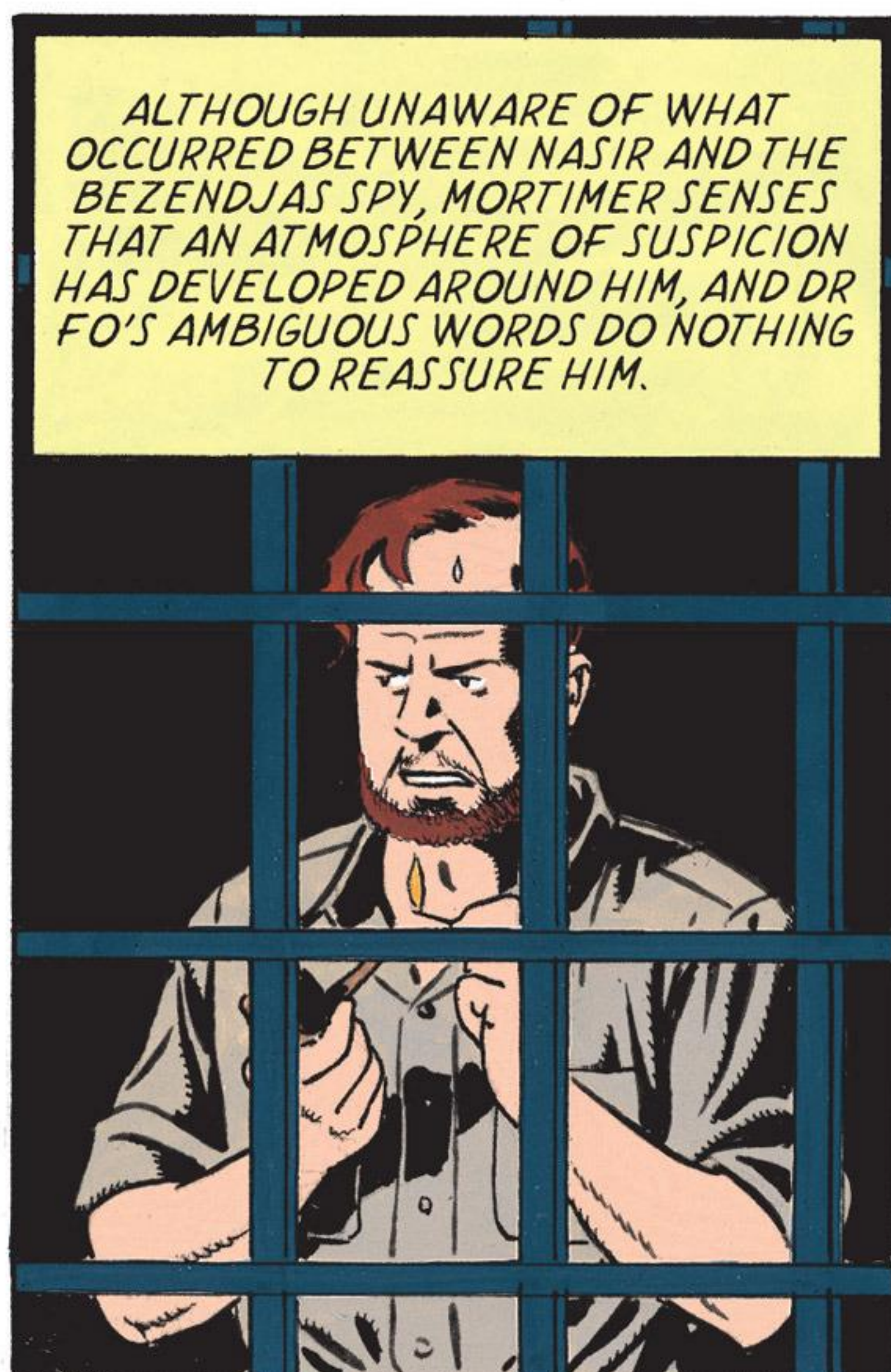
TREEEET

Halt! Get down!





*THE GERMAN-MADE V1 FLYING BOMB WAS THE FIRST CRUISE MISSILE IN HISTORY.





It's not thunder but the sound of an aeroplane!

Myself, I heard nothing... Even so, what does it matter?



We can't see a thing here. Do you mind? I'm going to turn on the lights...

No! No! No lights!... Or maybe just the small lamp... Do you hear me? The small lamp!



Obviously, this weather is doing nothing for our nerves. Allow me to retire... Good night, gentlemen.

Evening...

Goodnight.



LEFT ALONE, THE TWO MEN REMAIN SILENT, WHILE OUTSIDE THE STORM BECOMES EVER MORE VIOLENT...



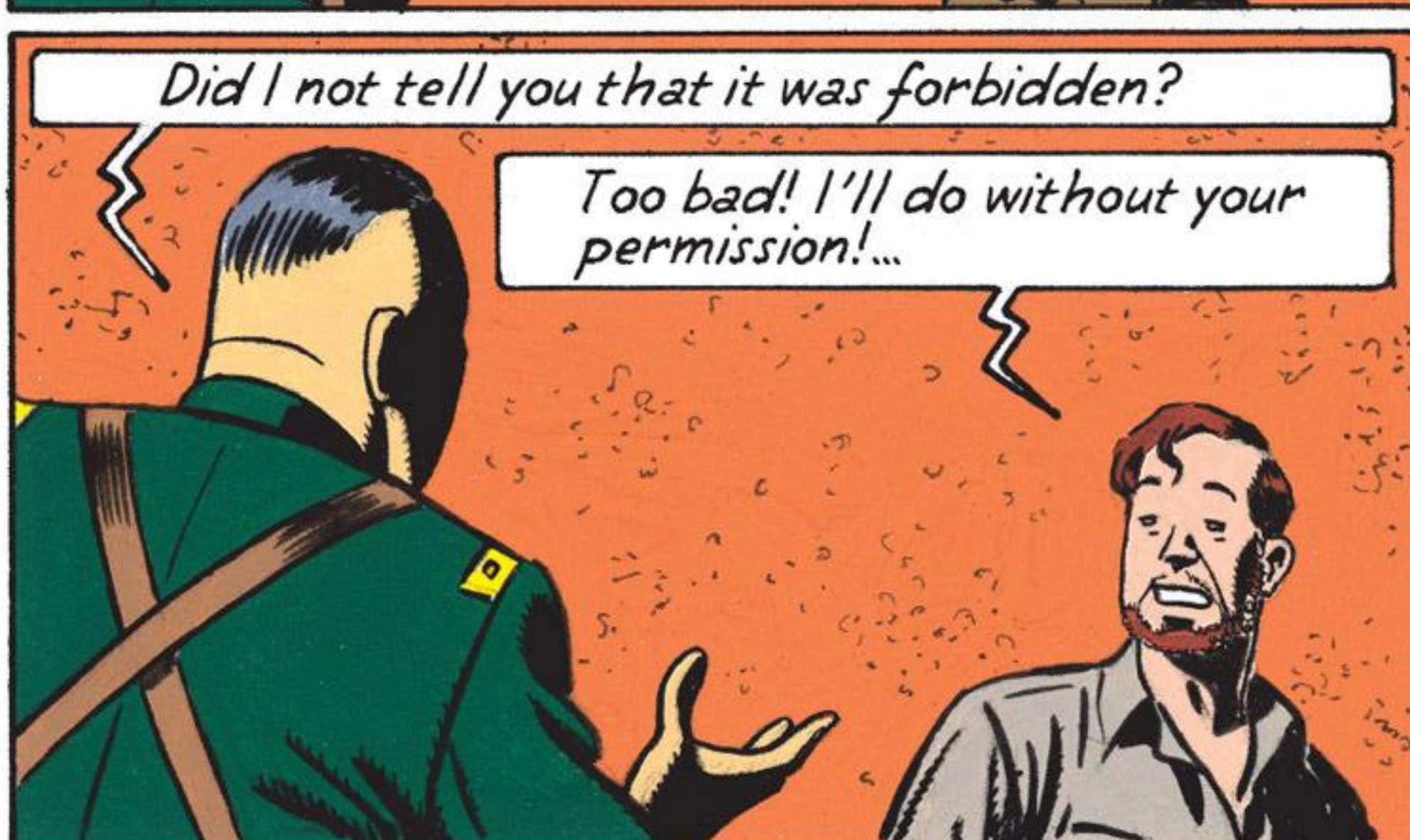
NOW, CONVINCED THAT HIS RUSE HAS BEEN DISCOVERED, MORTIMER MAKES A SNAP DECISION: TO RISK IT ALL AND ESCAPE AT ALL COST UNDER COVER OF THE FURY OF THE ELEMENTS!

The die is cast!



Stop, Professor! Where are you going?

To the terrace, my dear fellow. I've had enough of sweating in here!!!



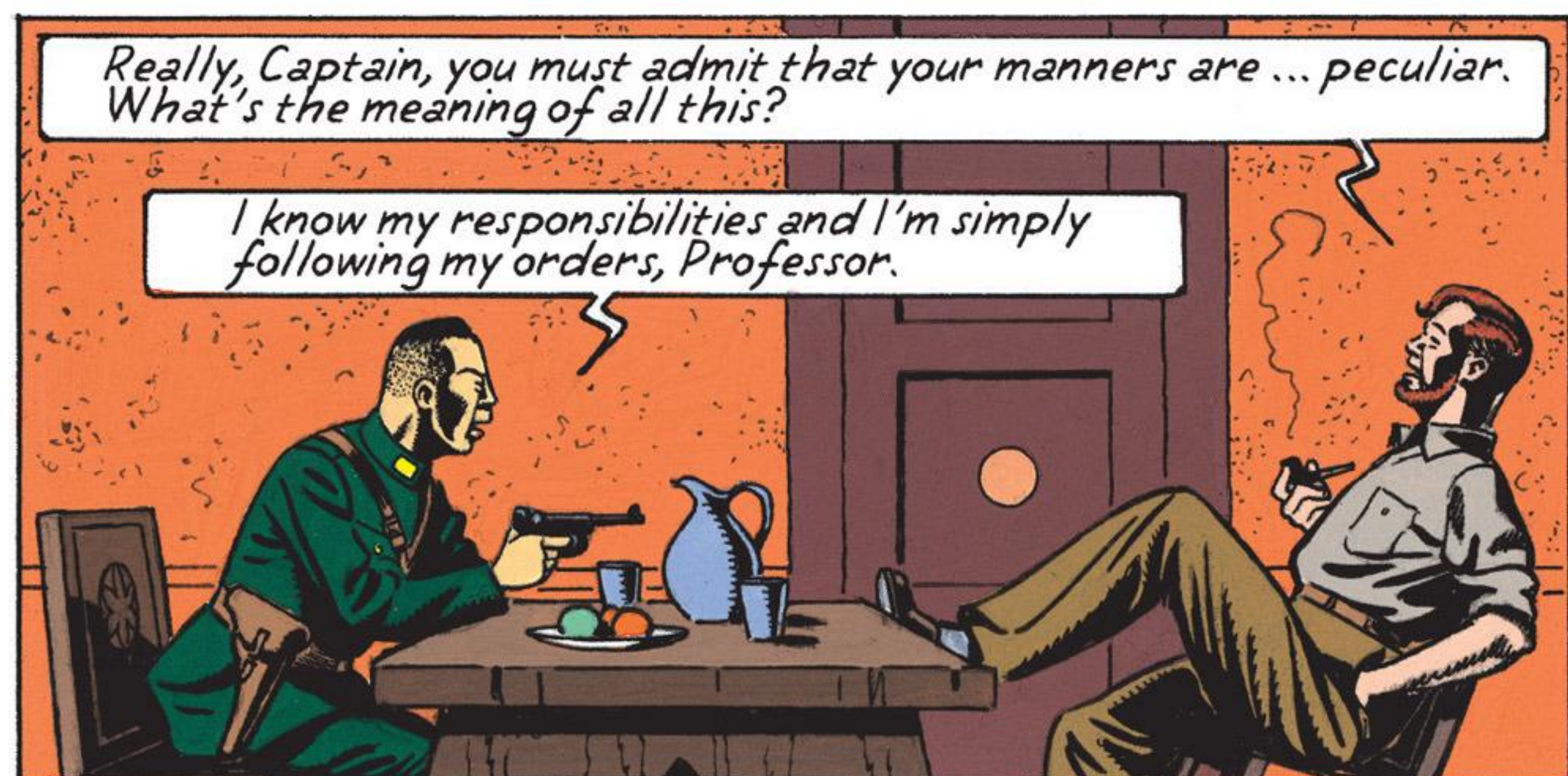
Did I not tell you that it was forbidden?

Too bad! I'll do without your permission!...



One more step and I'll put a bullet in your leg!!!

Oh! Of course, since you put it that way...



Really, Captain, you must admit that your manners are ... peculiar. What's the meaning of all this?

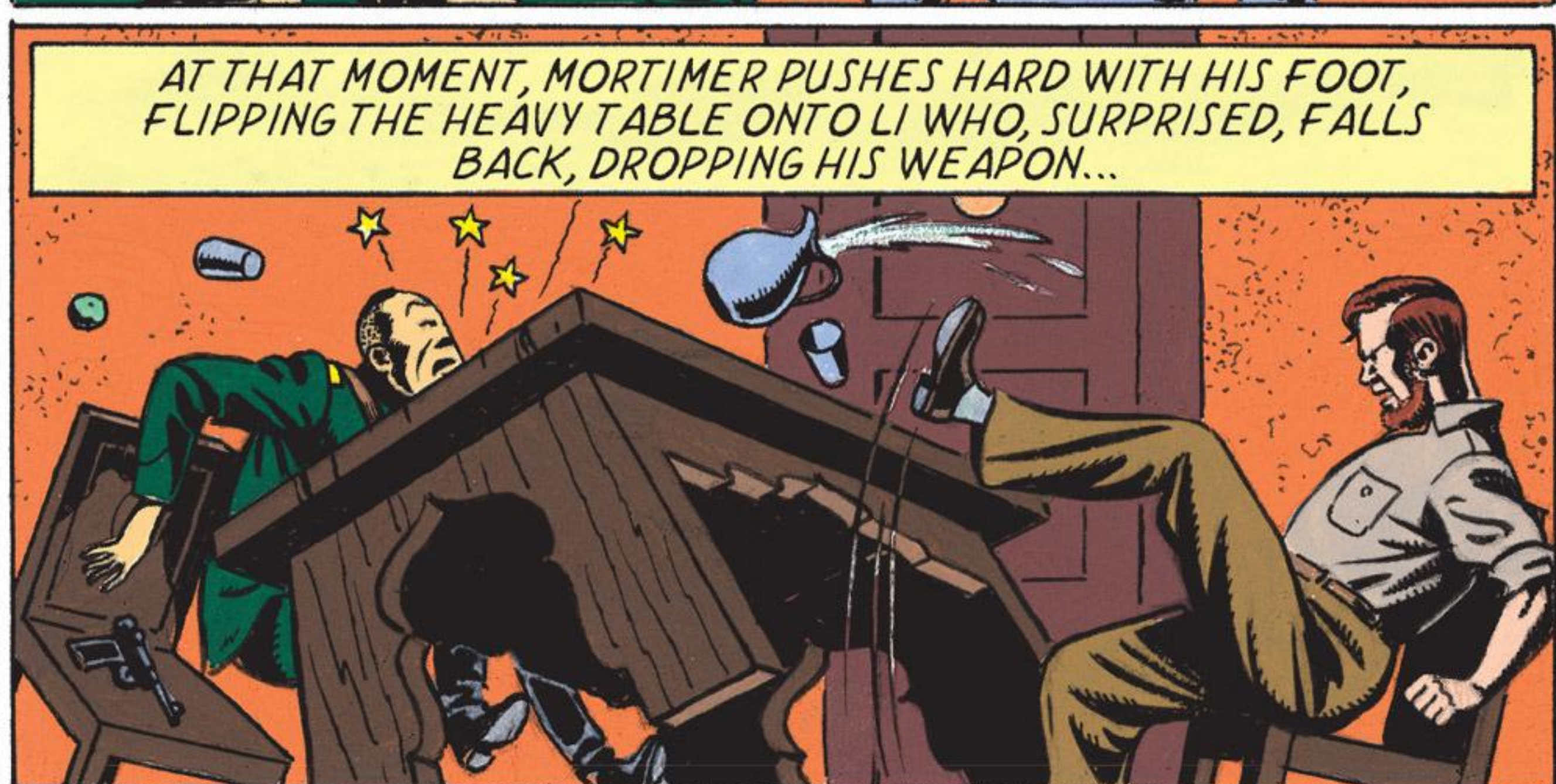
I know my responsibilities and I'm simply following my orders, Professor.



I still don't understand you... Do you distrust me, by any chance? Come now, Captain, am I not entirely in your power?



You're a very intelligent man, Professor, but you're making the mistake of taking me for a fool. That Baloch dog who sneaked in here may not have been your only accomplice. Therefore, I...



AT THAT MOMENT, MORTIMER PUSHES HARD WITH HIS FOOT, FLIPPING THE HEAVY TABLE ONTO LI WHO, SURPRISED, FALLS BACK, DROPPING HIS WEAPON...

WHILE THUNDER RUMBLES CONTINUOUSLY OUTSIDE, LI, STUNNED, FALLS FLAT ON HIS BACK IN THE MIDDLE OF THE OVERTURNED FURNITURE.



And now, Captain, do you authorise me to go to the terrace?



HOWEVER, THE IMPERIAL HAS NOTICED HIS PISTOL, WHICH HAS FALLEN WITHIN REACH OF HIS HAND...



LI QUICKLY TRIES TO SEIZE HOLD OF IT, BUT MORTIMER HAS SEEN HIS MOVE, AND WITH A MIGHTY LEAP THROWS HIMSELF ONTO HIS OPPONENT...



AGILE AS A CAT, THE OFFICER CATCHES HIM ON HIS RAISED FOOT THEN, GRABBING THE FRONT OF HIS SHIRT, THRUSTS HIM AWAY, SENDING HIM SPRAWLING TO THE FLOOR.



BEFORE MORTIMER'S HAD A CHANCE TO RECOVER FROM HIS SURPRISE, LI HAS SEIZED THE PISTOL...



...AND STEPS FORWARD TO POINT IT MENACINGLY AT HIS FOE. BUT MORTIMER, LASHING OUT WITH HIS LEG, KICKS THE WEAPON OUT OF HIS HAND!



THEN, LEAPING TO HIS FEET, HE DEALS A FORMIDABLE RIGHT BLOW TO LI'S JAW. THE IMPERIAL STAGGERS, DAZED...

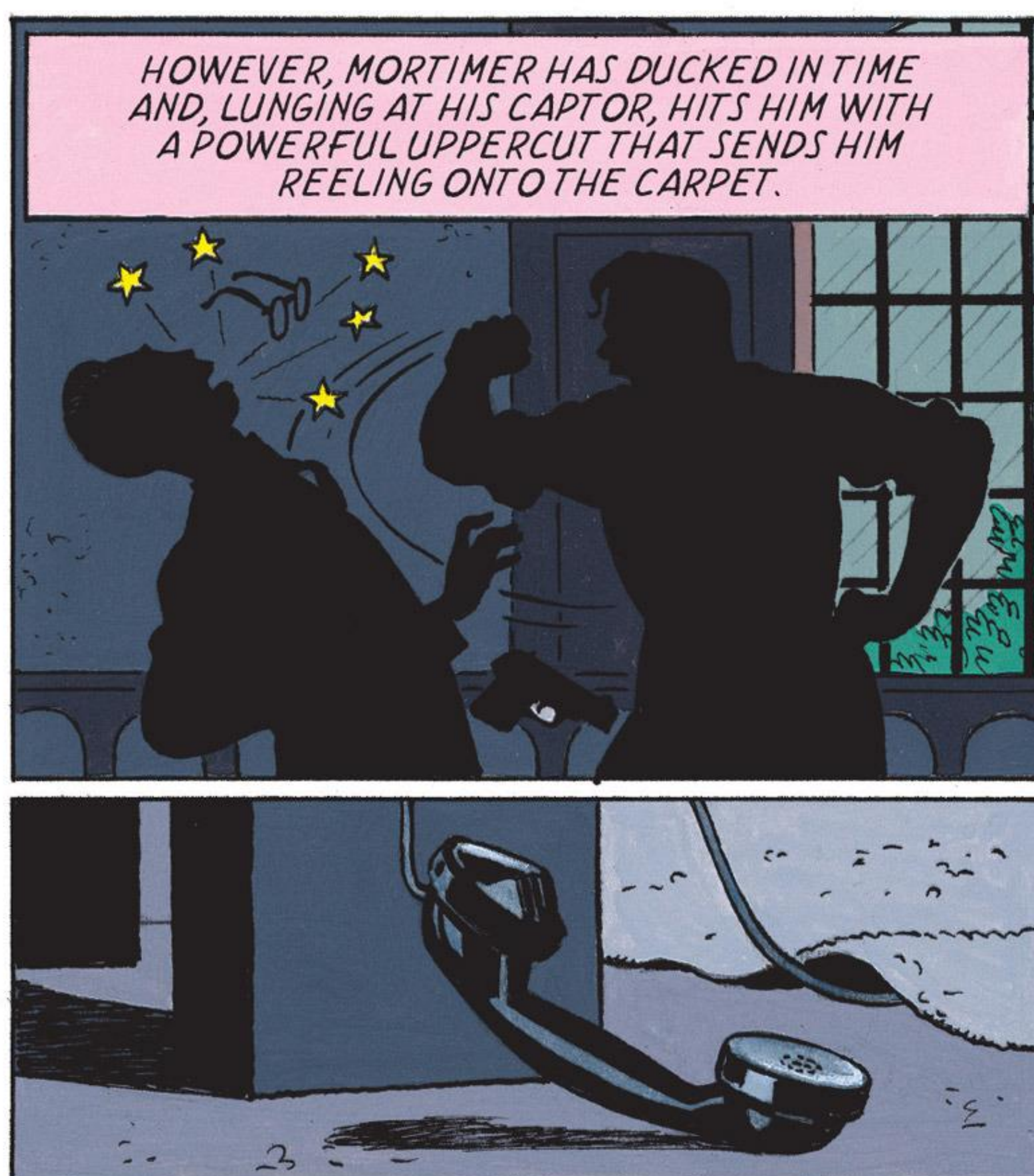
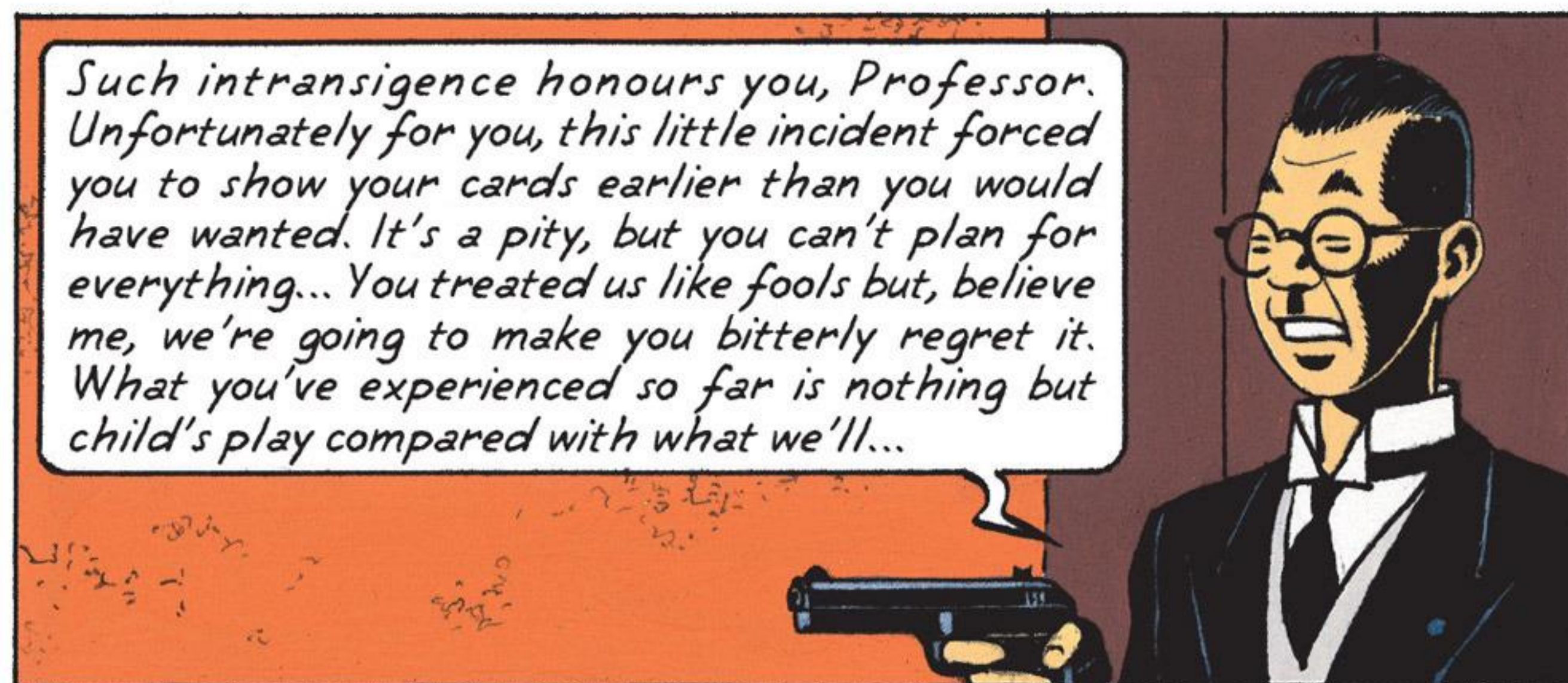
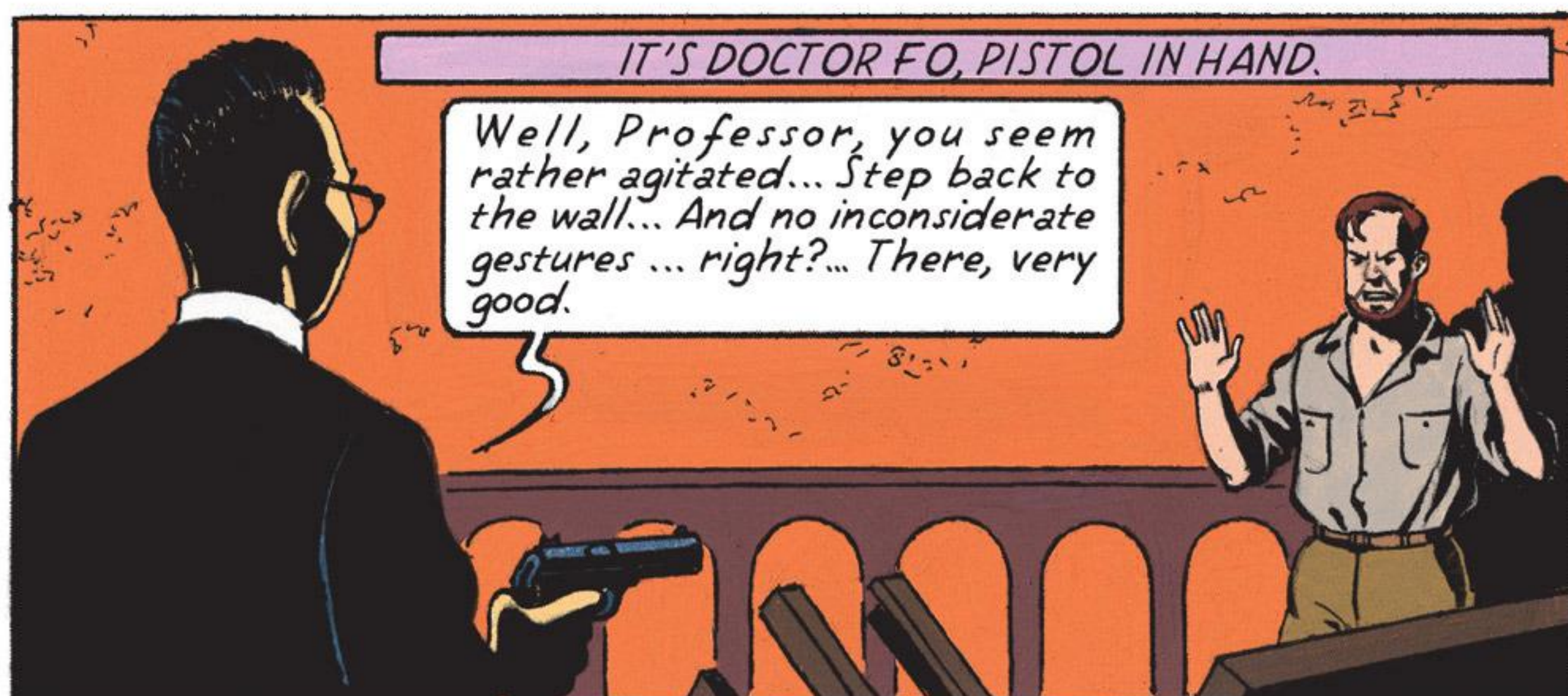


WITHOUT GIVING HIM TIME TO RECOVER, MORTIMER FINISHES HIM OFF WITH A LEFT HOOK!



THE CAPTAIN CRUMPLES TO THE GROUND... MORTIMER IMMEDIATELY LEANS FORWARD TO PICK UP HIS WEAPON WHEN HE IS STARTLED BY A COLD VOICE COMING FROM BEHIND HIM...





Sergeant, take four men and run to the pavilion. It's probably just a power failure, but I'd rather err on the side of caution.

Yes, Lieutenant.



IN THE MEANTIME, MORTIMER, MASTER OF THE FIELD, PICKS UP HIS OPPONENTS' WEAPONS.

And now Fo's...



ABOUT TO LEAVE, HE PUTS HIS FOOT ON AN OBJECT AND...

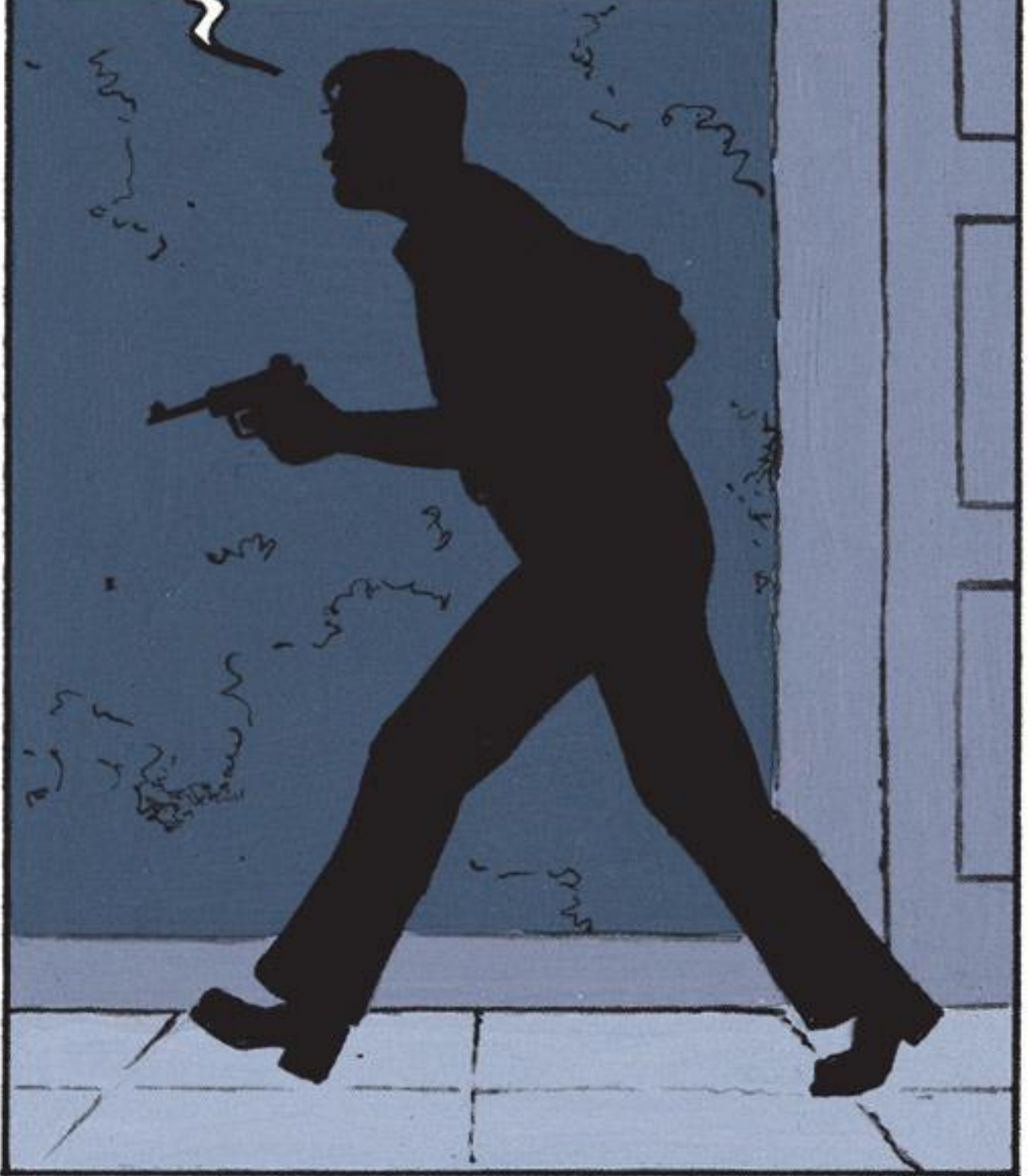


What fool left this...? Ah! Li's torch. Could come in handy. I'll take it.



HAVING LOCKED LI AND FO IN THE ROOM, THE PROFESSOR QUICKLY MAKES HIS WAY TOWARDS THE PAVILION'S EXIT.

If I can make it to the fig tree, the rest will be easy.



TOO LATE! THE GATE IN THE PALISADE HAS JUST OPENED.

Blast it!

Anything unusual?

Nothing, Sergeant, but with this storm...



SINCE ESCAPING THROUGH THE GARDEN IS NOW IMPOSSIBLE, MORTIMER HURRIEDLY CLOSES THE DOOR AND SETS THE SAFETY BARS ACROSS IT...



...THEN HE HASTILY CLIMBS THE STAIRS THAT LEAD TO THE TERRACE.



THE NIGHT IS IMPENETRABLE AND THE RAIN FALLS IN TORRENTS. MORTIMER CARRIES OUT A QUICK INSPECTION, BUT IS SOON FORCED TO ABANDON ANY HOPE OF ESCAPING THIS WAY. THE JAWS OF THE TRAP HAVE CLOSED...

Too high!

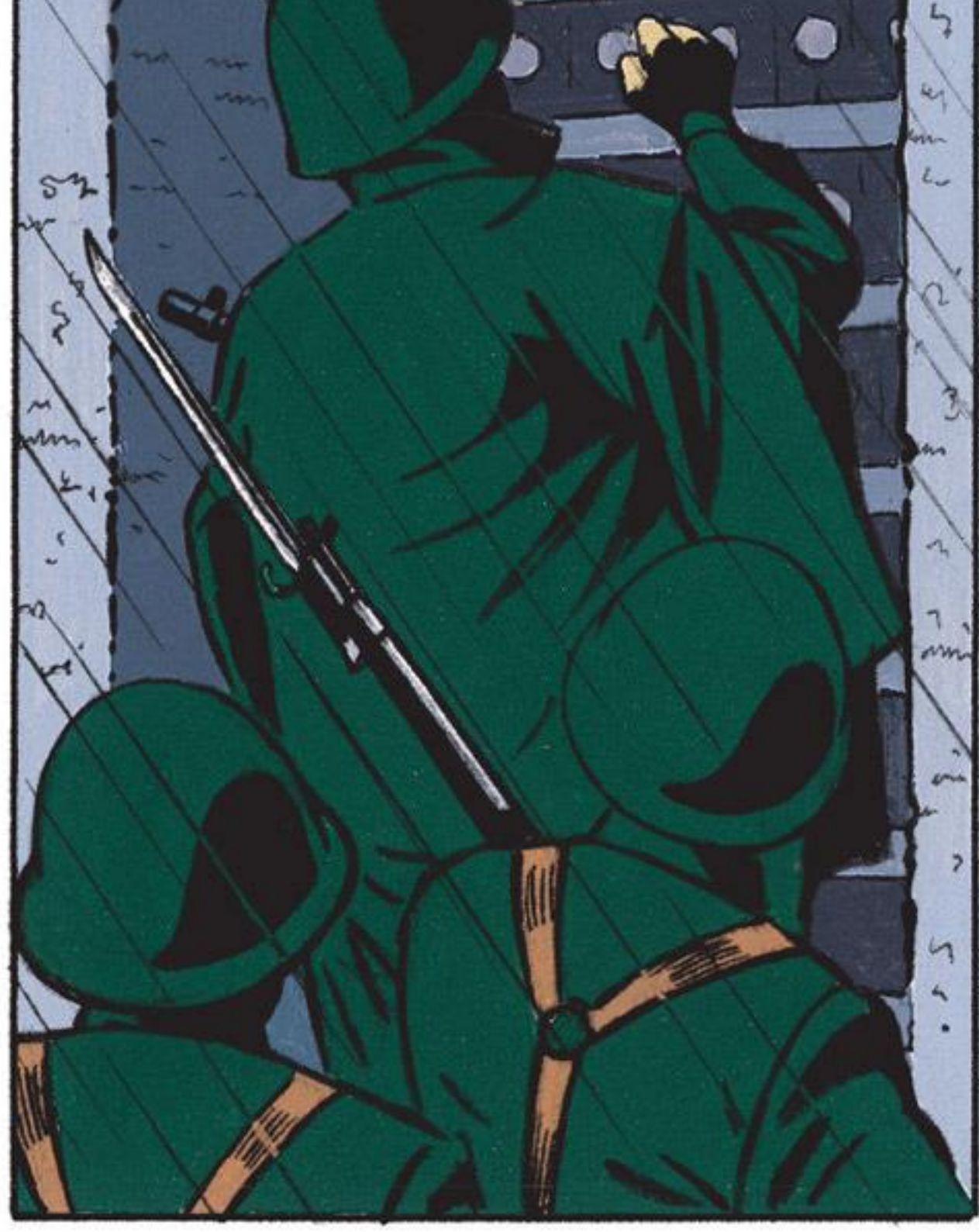


No lights. That's strange...



Captain Li! Captain Li! It's the guard!

BOOM BOOM



No answer... Break the door down, quick!

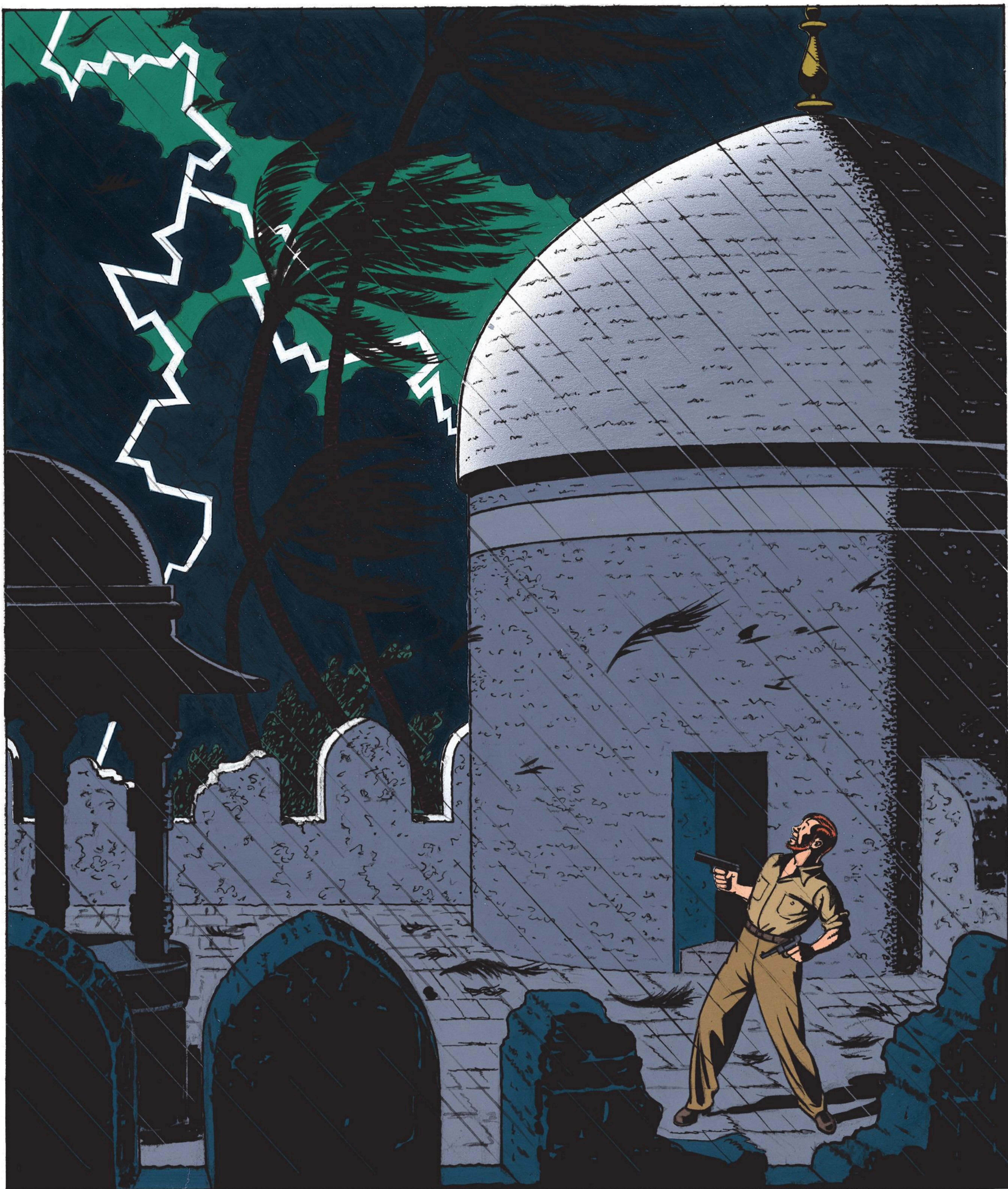


And that confounded plane! Perhaps that's trying to join the party, too? That would be the last straw!



What can I do? If I open fire, I'll give away my position... If I let them force their way in, they'll find me anyway. So?...





MORTIMER TURNS ROUND... SUDDENLY, AMONG THE RAGING ELEMENTS, A FLASH OF LIGHTNING REVEALS SOMETHING THAT SEEMS TO HANG IMMOBILE OVER THE GARDEN...

MORTIMER IS PREPARED TO START SHOOTING WHEN ALL AT ONCE THE SOUND OF THE PLANE APPEARS TO COME NEARER...

What the devil does it want, that thing?!

JUST THEN, AMONG THE RAGING ELEMENTS, A FLASH OF LIGHTNING REVEALS A HELICOPTER HOLDING POSITION OVER THE GARDEN...

Good heavens! The helicopter from the S2!!! Quick, the torch!!!

FEVERISHLY MORTIMER BEGINS SENDING DISTRESS SIGNALS TOWARDS THE SKY.

AT THAT PRECISE MOMENT, A STAFF CAR ENTERS THE RESIDENCE GROUNDS, BRINGING OLRİK BACK FROM THE SANDSTORM.

Er... Yes, I think so, Colonel... When I received your message, I tried to warn Captain Li, but it was Doctor Sun Fo who took the call. Then...

MEANWHILE, THE GUARDS ARE HAMMERING AWAY AT THE PAVILION'S DOOR, BUT IT HOLDS TOGETHER...

It's no good, Sergeant, we need an axe...

So be it, then! We don't have a choice!

Very happy to see you again, Colonel, although we weren't expecting you so early. Kotri just sent notice and...

Yes, yes, all right! Tell me, is everything normal at the pavilion?

BANGBANG BANG

!?

?

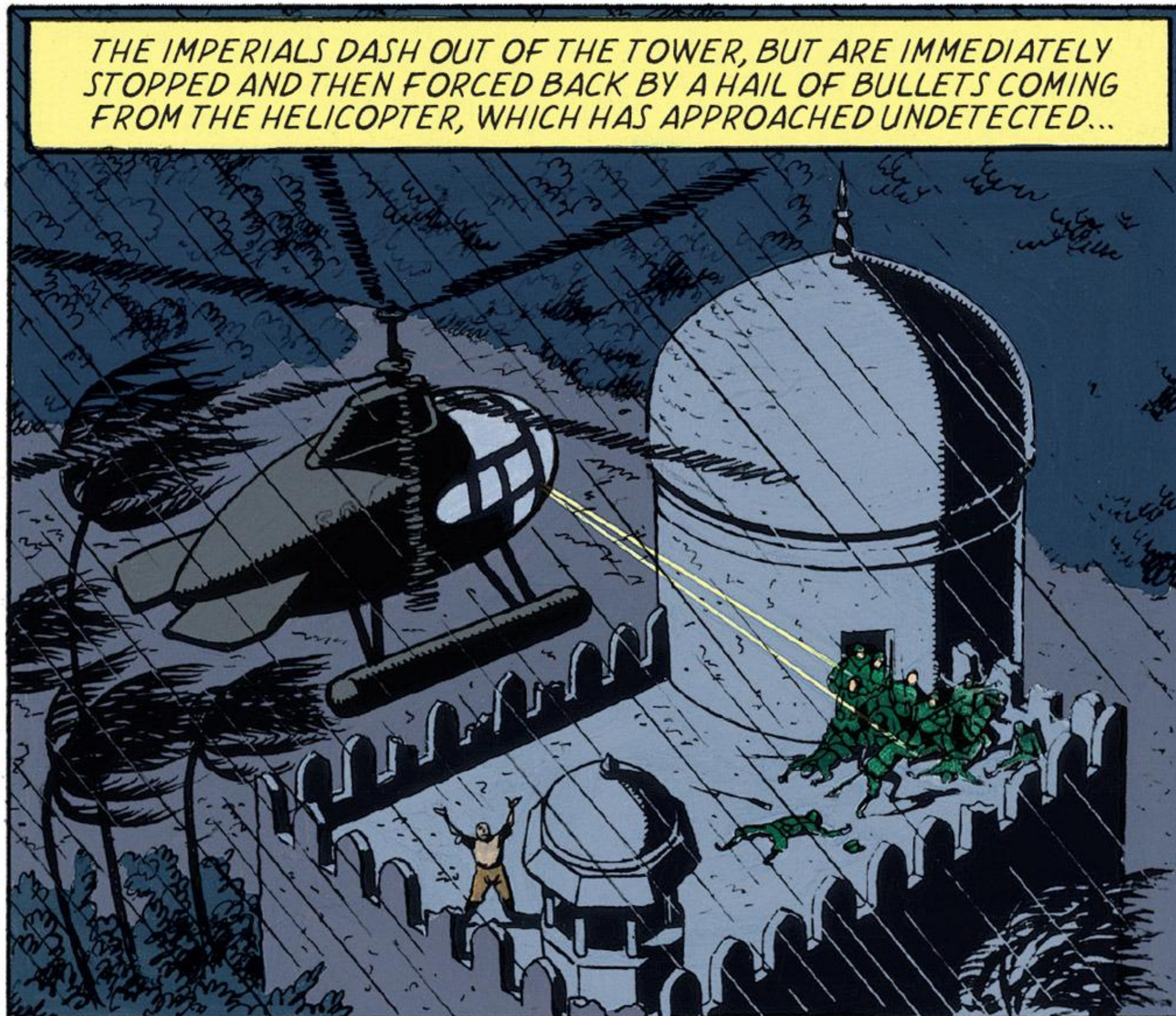
They're shooting their way in!!!

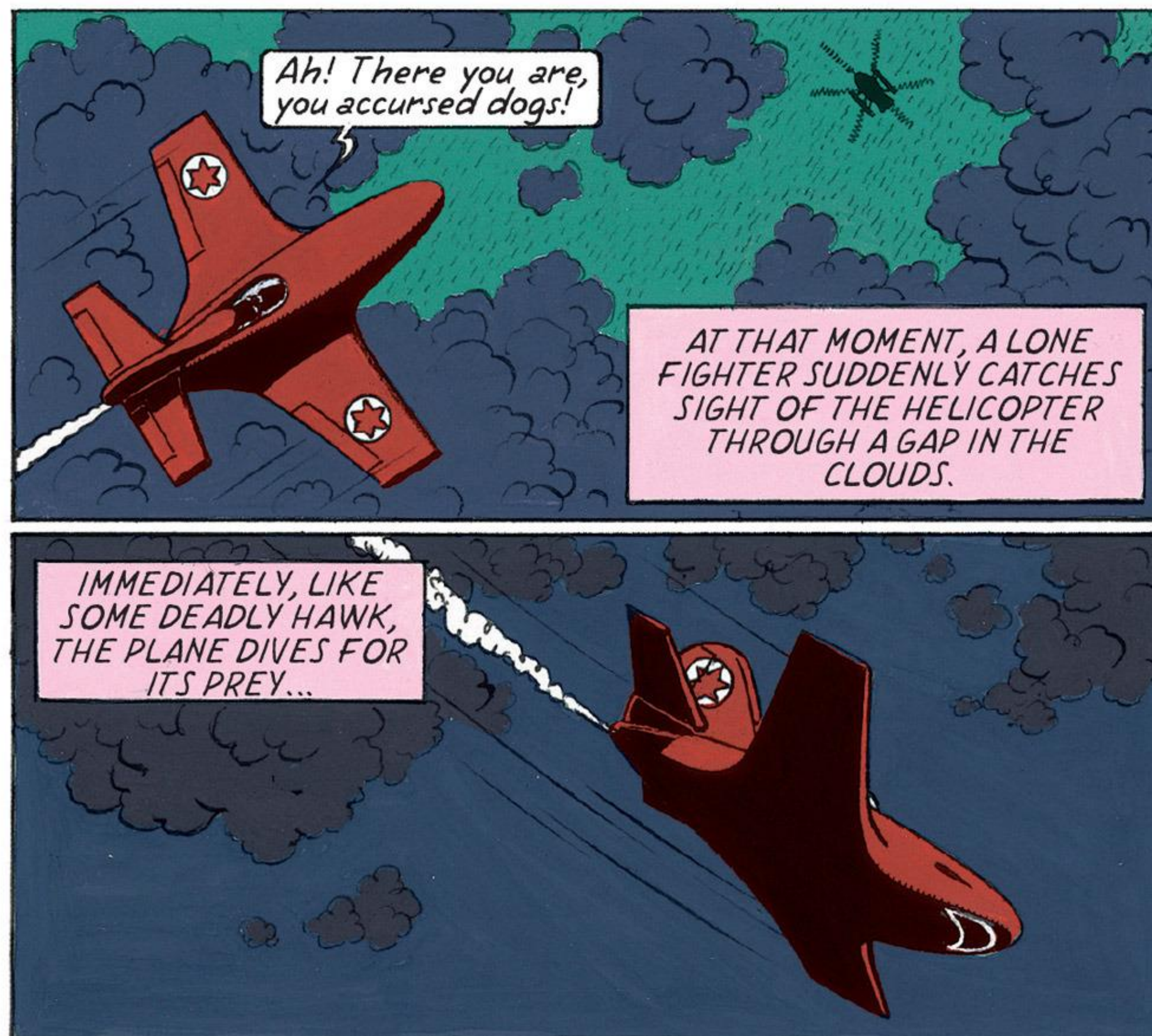
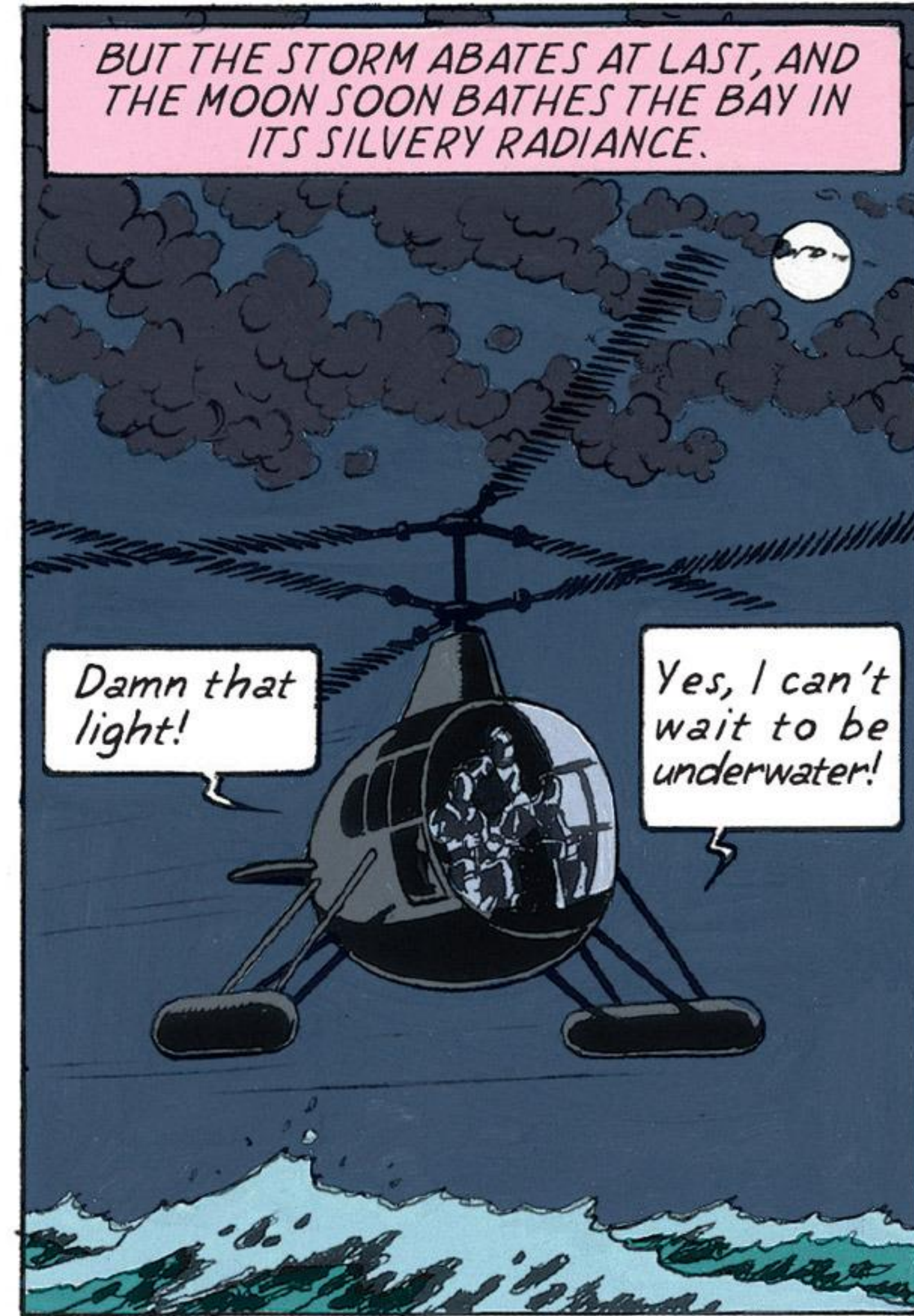
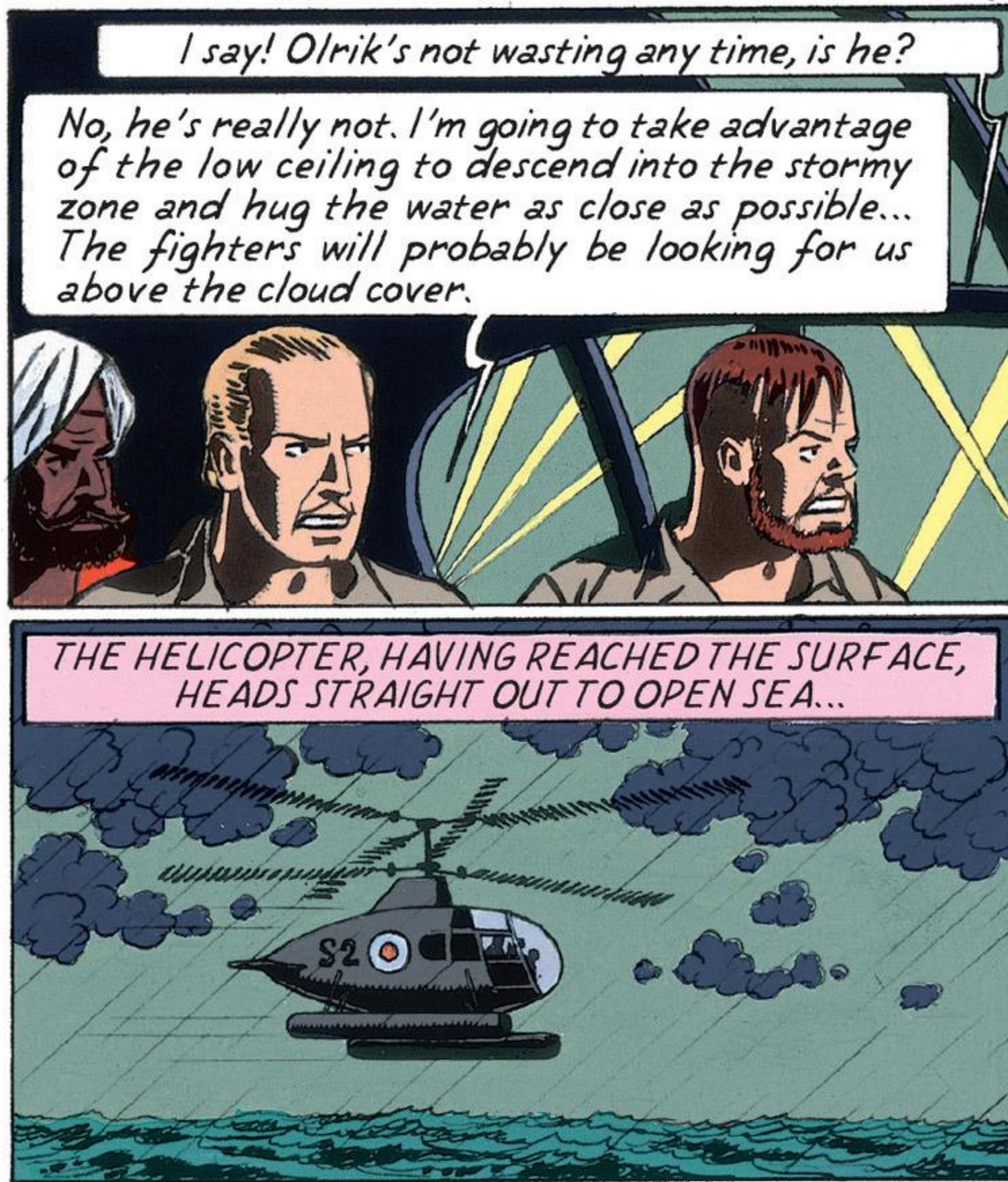
That's it! The lock's given way! Come on, now the safety bars!

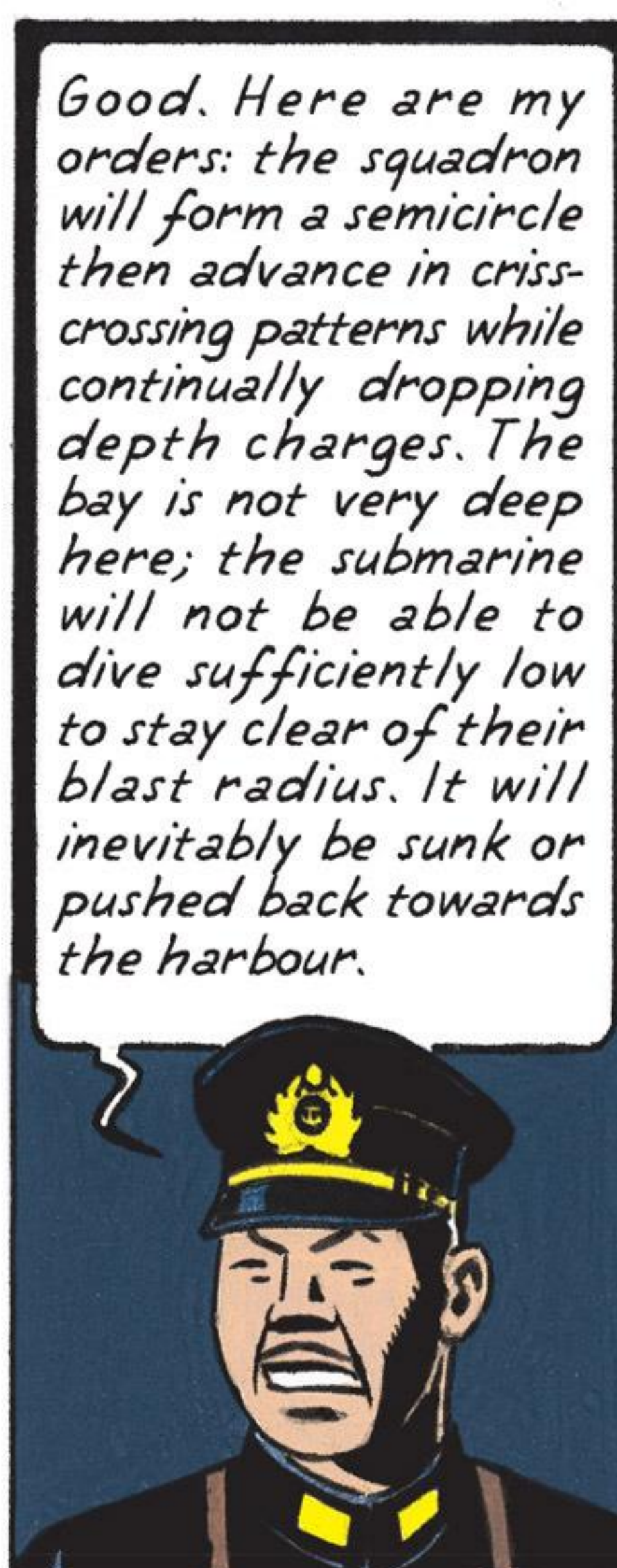
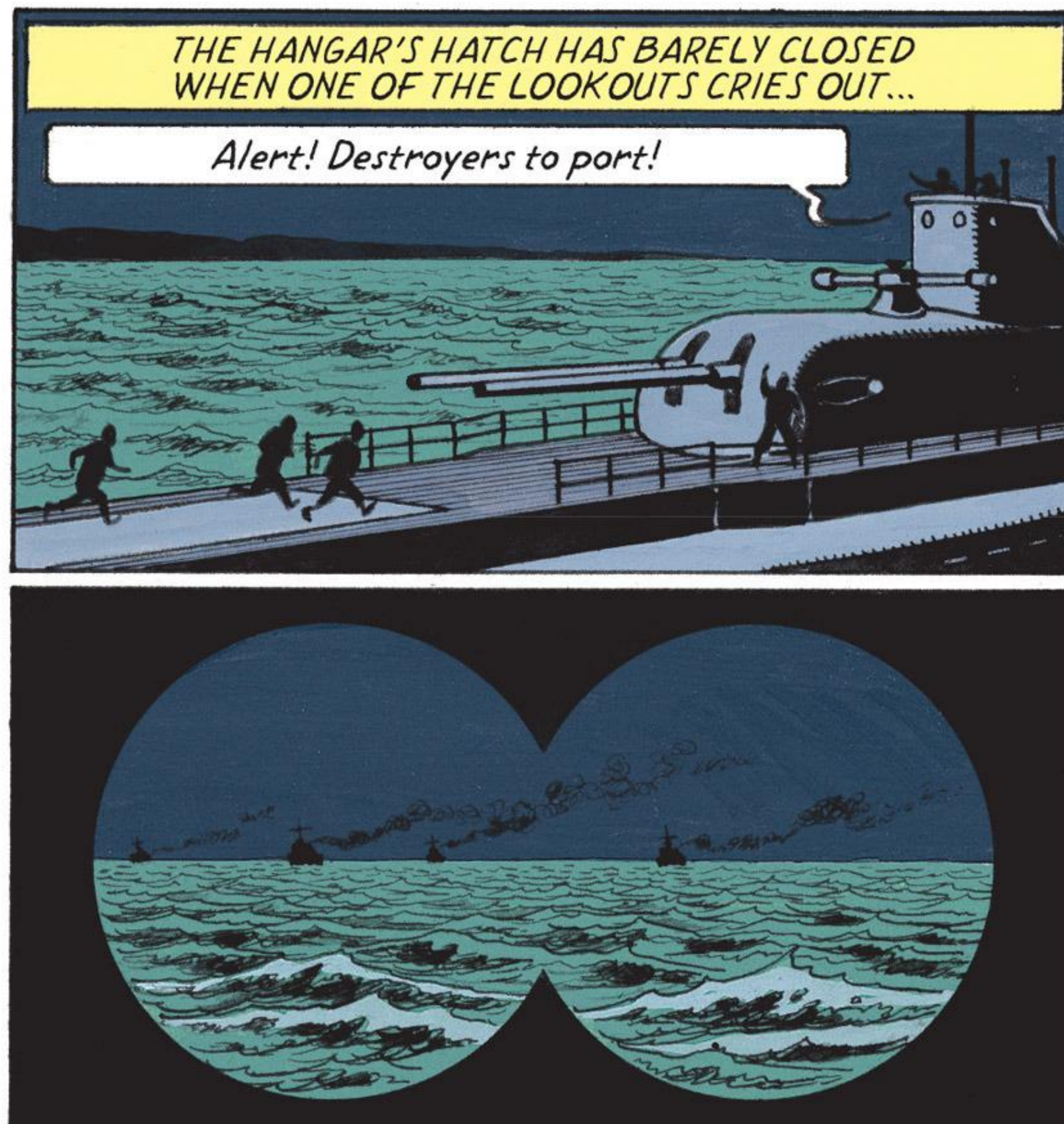
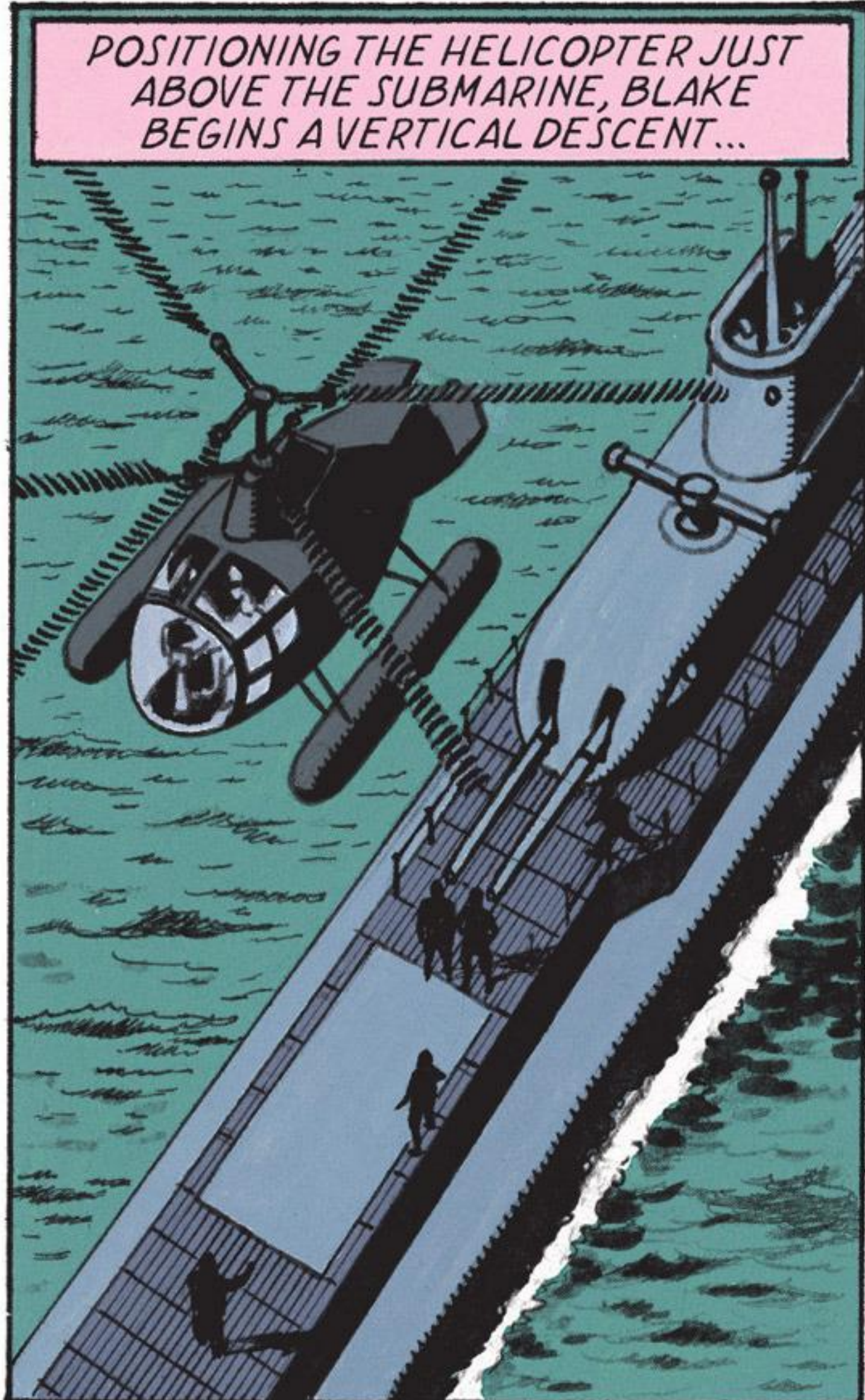
MORTIMER RUSHES TO THE PARAPET, INTENT ON FIGHTING THE INVASION. BUT HE LETS OUT A CRY AT THE SIGHT OF A MAN RUNNING TOWARDS THE PAVILION WITH A PLATOON OF SOLDIERS.

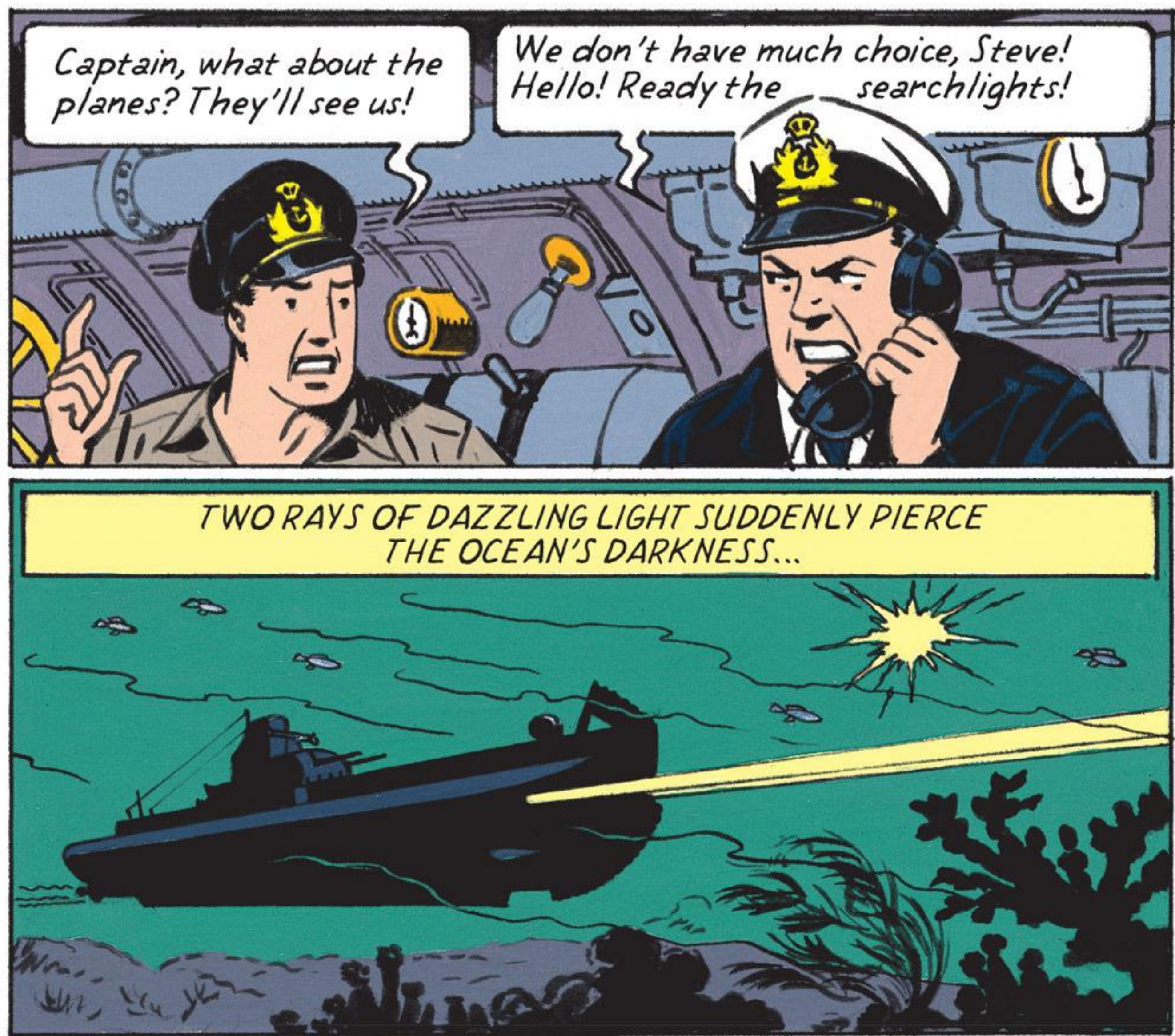
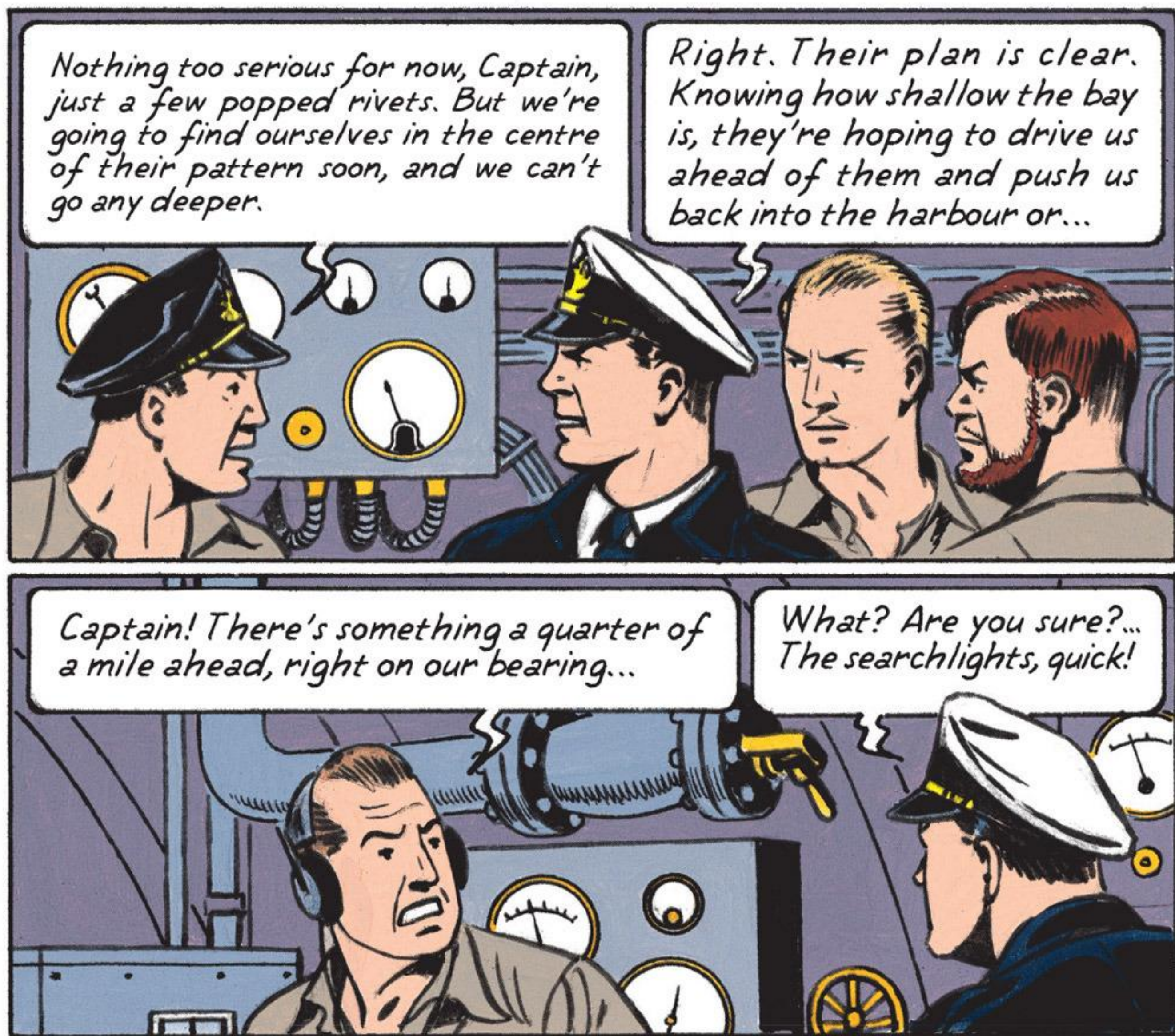
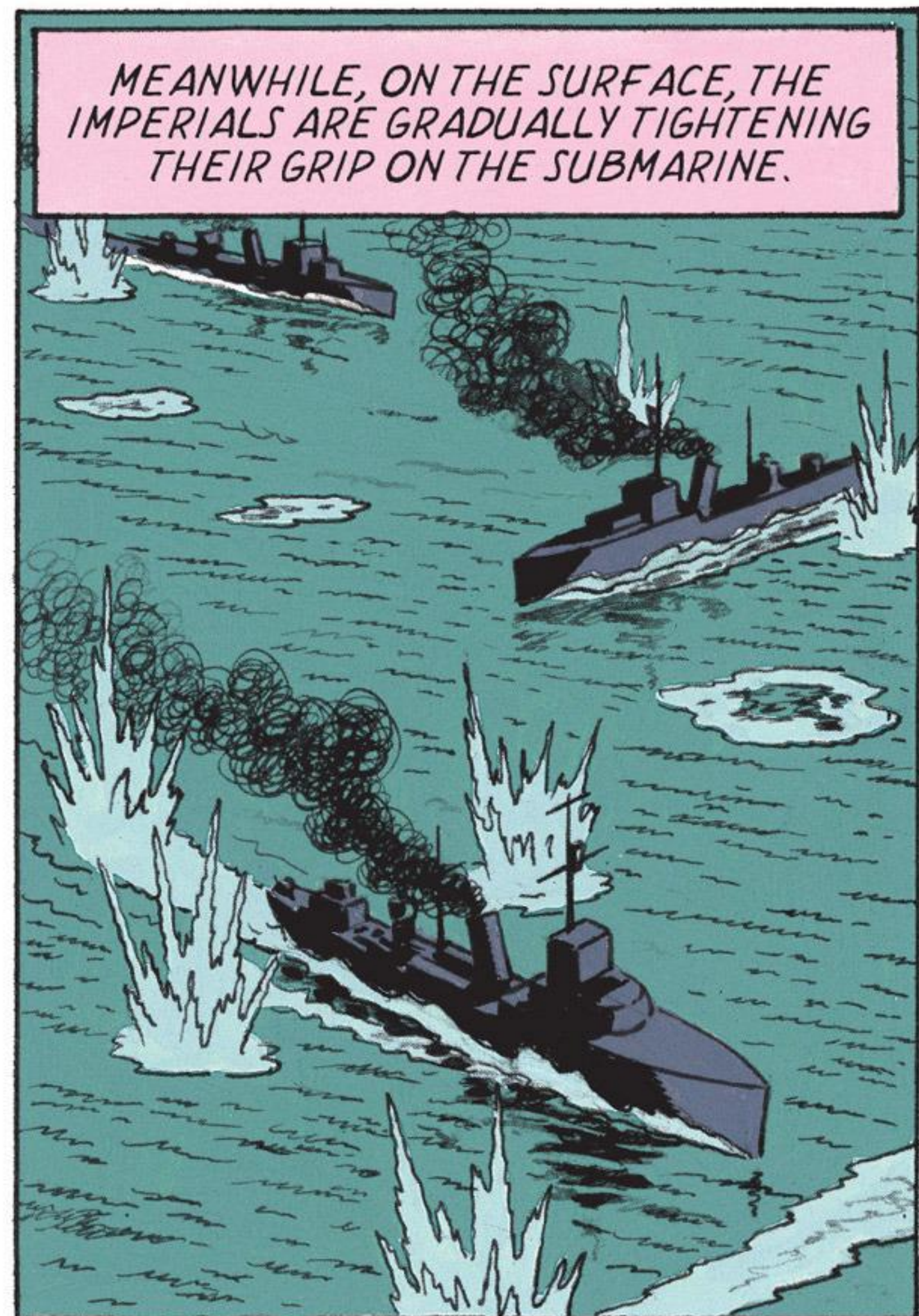
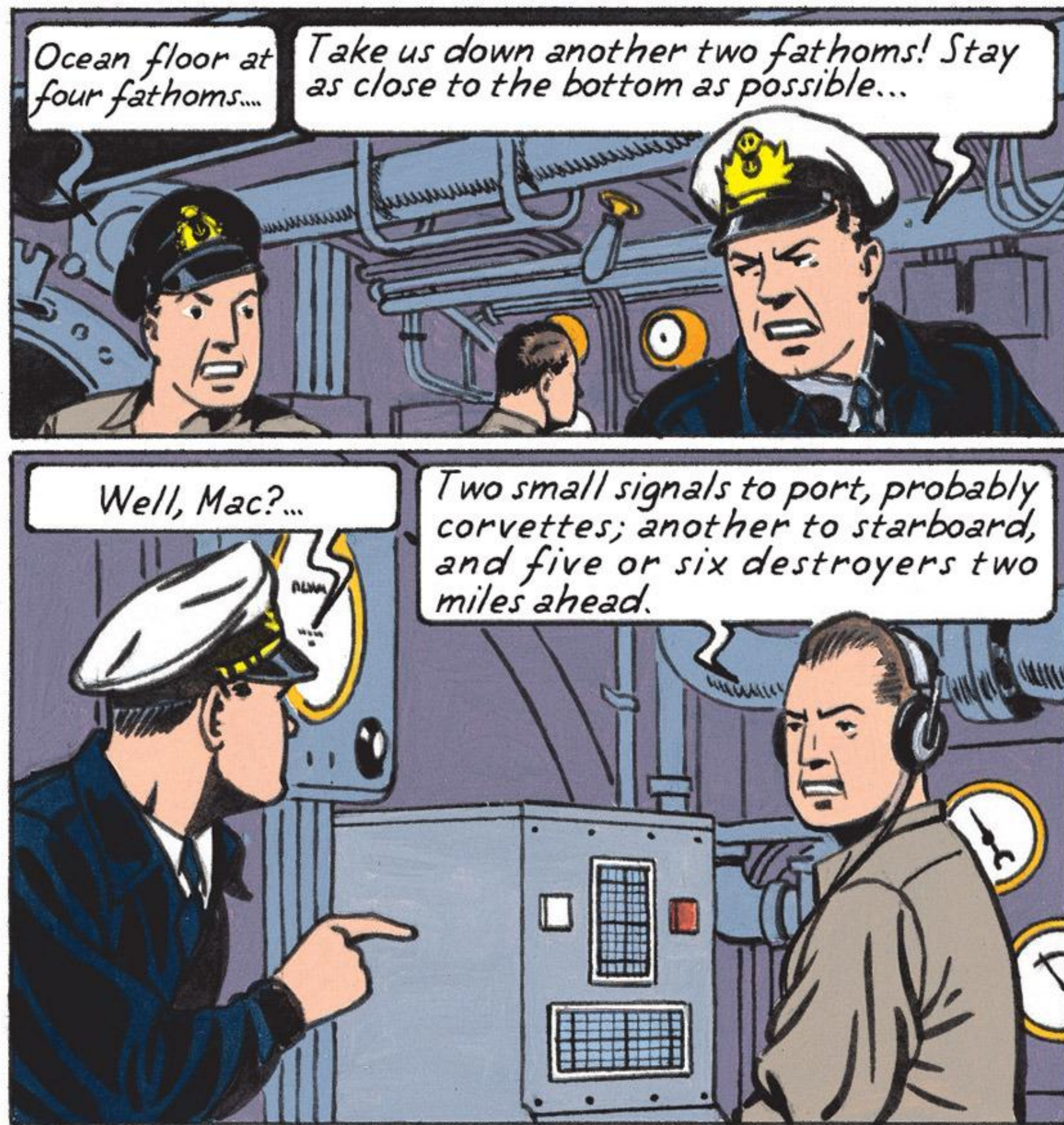
Olrik!!!











BARRING THE PATH OF THE S2, THE ENORMOUS DISLOCATED HULK OF A BATTLE CRUISER APPEARS IN THE SEARCHLIGHTS.



The wreck of the Ajax!!!

By Jove! This is a unique opportunity I'm going to try and make the best of. Here's how: I'm going to position the S2 alongside the Ajax. Since the wreck leans to port, it will partially protect us from the depth charges. Besides, the enemy will never think of looking for us in such a dangerous spot... It's quite a risky manoeuvre, though. The blasts from the depth charges could cause the Ajax to fall onto us...



Helm! Right, 15 degrees rudder!... All back, 2/3!... All stop!

AND THE SUBMARINE, SIDLING CLOSE TO THE WRECK, COMES TO REST GENTLY ON THE OCEAN FLOOR.



No list... One degree up angle...

Perfect. Turn off the searchlights... Rig for silent running.

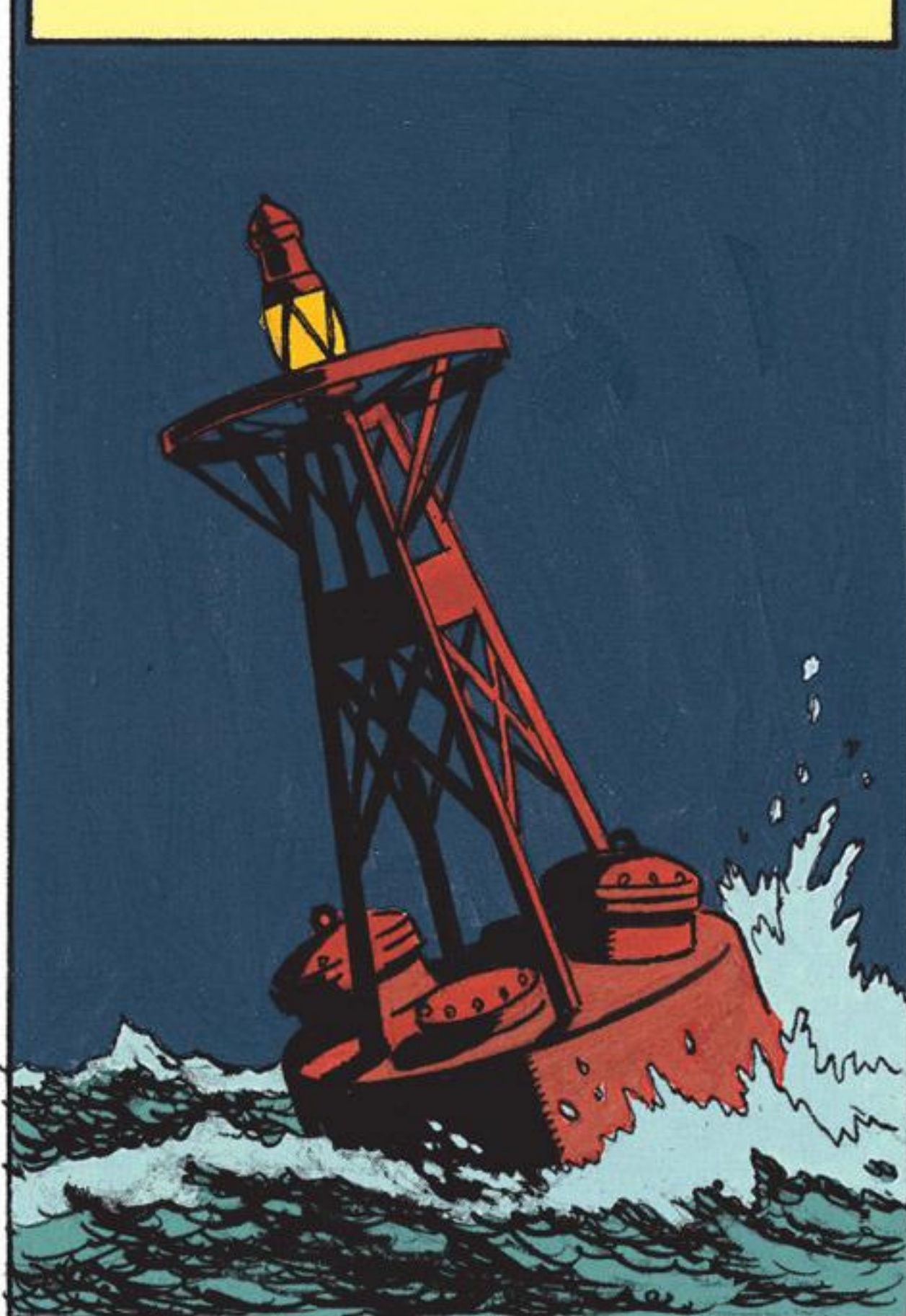


And now, we wait it out and hope that no patrol plane saw our lights from above...

...and that the Ajax doesn't crush us!



WHILE THE CREW OF THE S2 ANXIOUSLY AWAIT THE ENEMY'S APPROACH, 12 FATHOMS ABOVE THEM A BUOY SIGNALS THE PRESENCE OF THE WRECK.



THE LINE OF SHIPS IS GETTING CLOSER, AND ONE OF THE DESTROYERS IS HEADING STRAIGHT FOR THE BUOY.

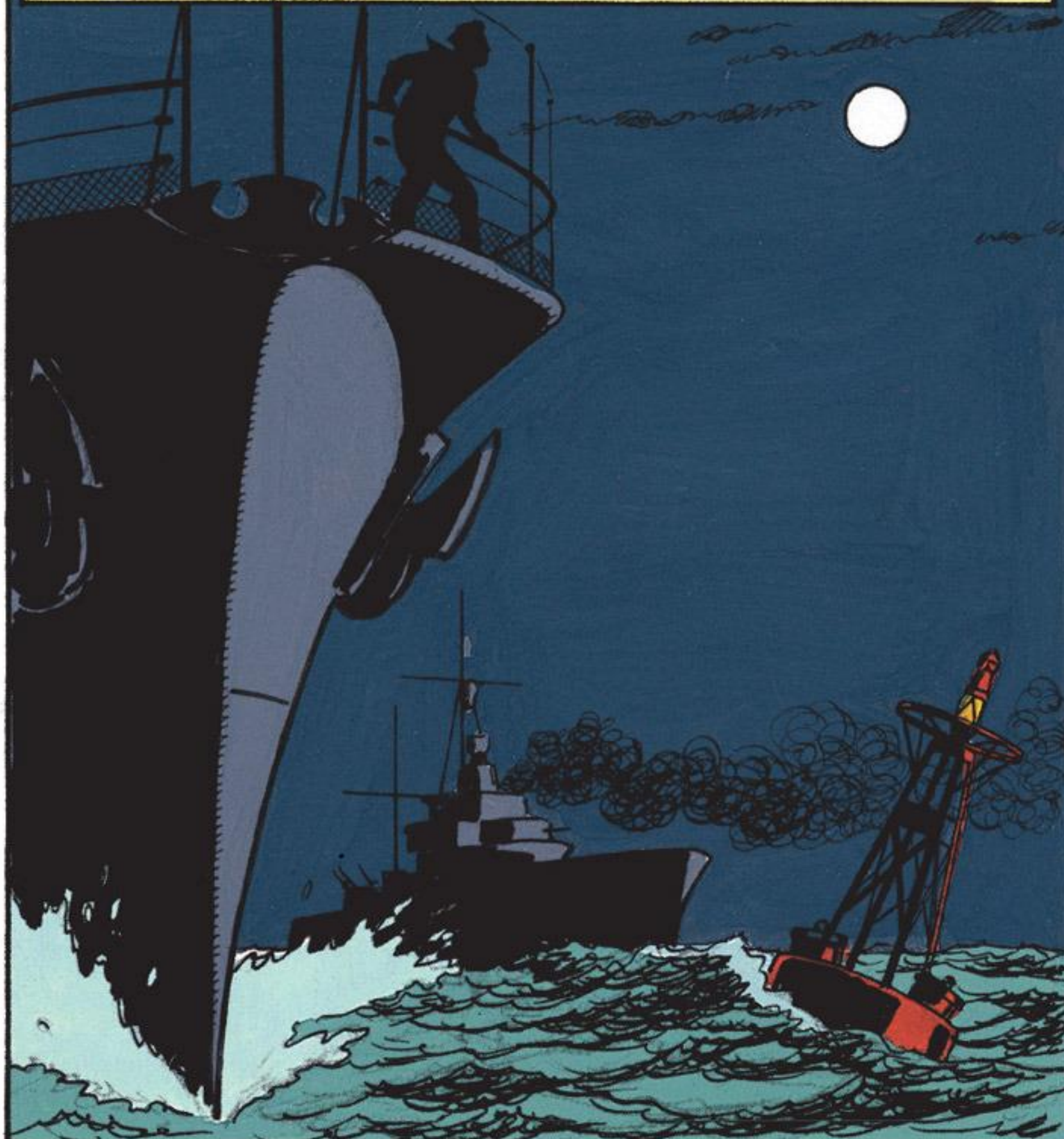


Captain, the Ajax buoy is just in front of us!

Hard to starboard!



HAVING VEERED AWAY, THE SHIP STEERS CLEAR OF THE BUOY AND CONTINUES ON ITS COURSE AT FULL SPEED.



MEANWHILE, BACK AT HQ, OLRİK, DEVoured BY RAGE AND RESENTMENT, IMPATIENTLY WAITS TO HEAR FROM THE FIELD.



Hello! Hello! This is HQ. Hello! Navy command, report search results... Hello! Air Force command, report search results... Hello! Hello!

BUT THE SHIPS AND PLANES PURSUE THEIR SEARCH IN VAIN... THE SEA IS KEEPING ITS SECRET...



Nothing to report!

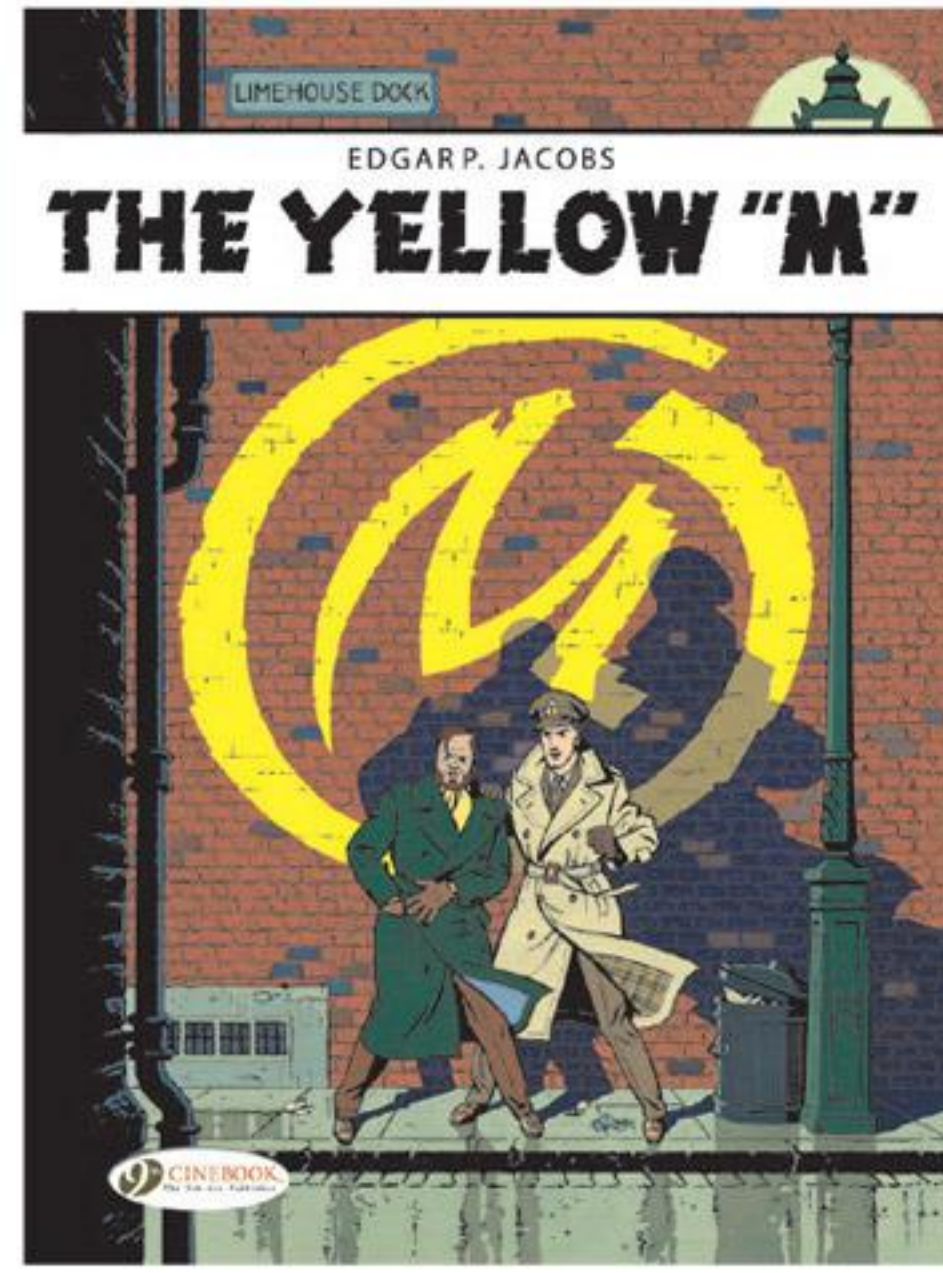
Nothing to report!

YOU CAN READ THE REST OF THIS ADVENTURE IN THE LAST EPISODE:

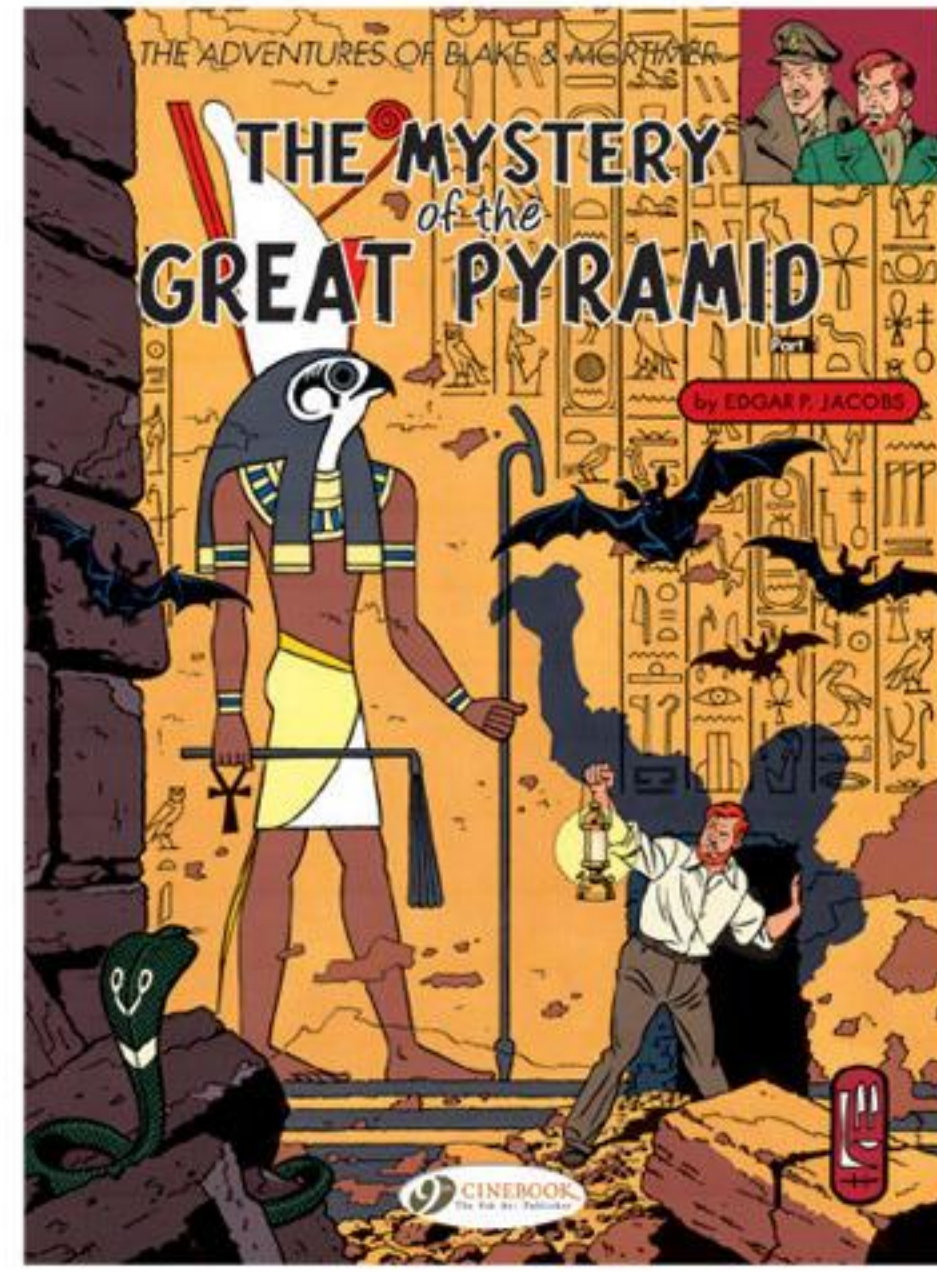
SX1 STRIKES BACK!



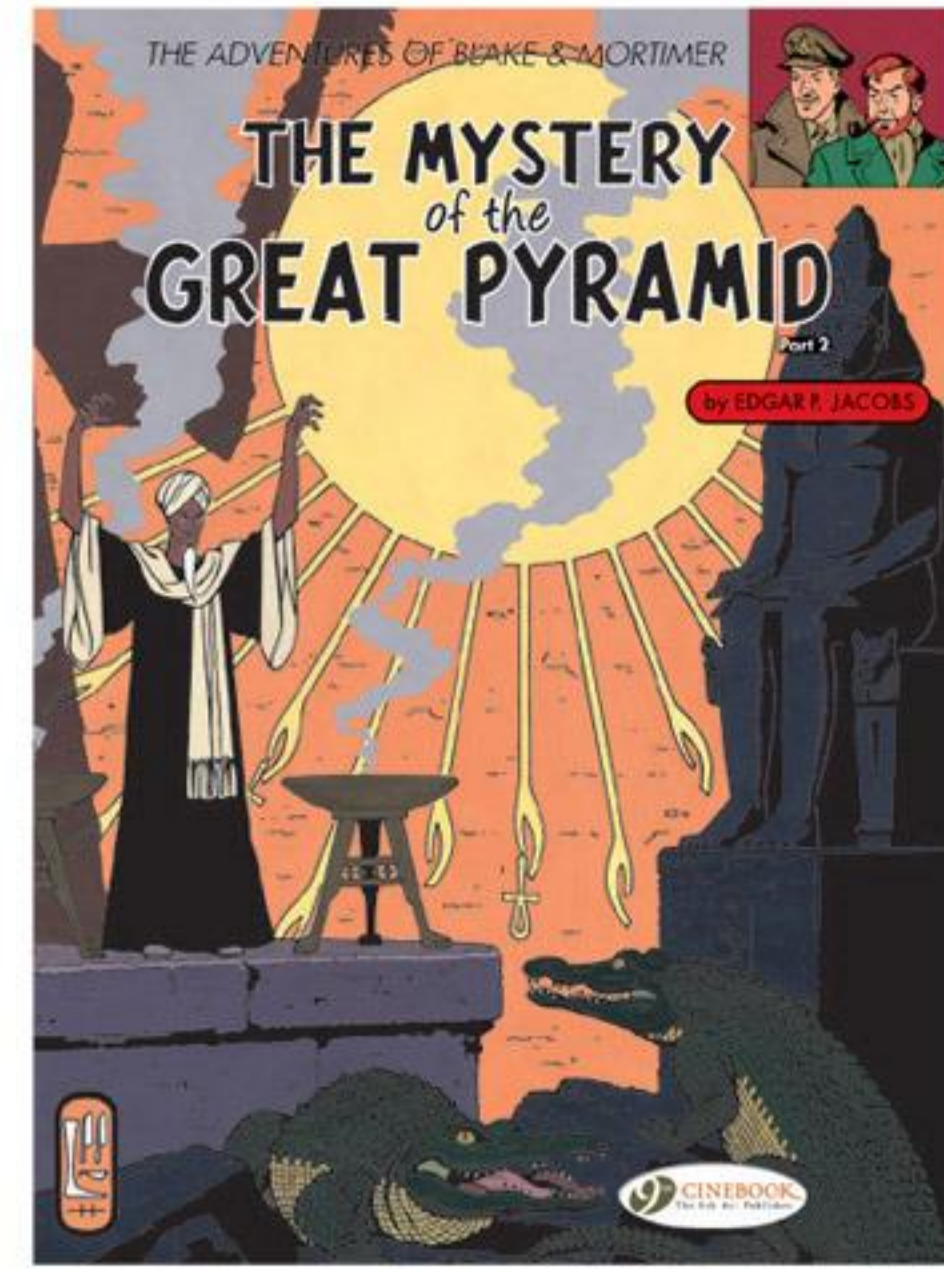
THE ADVENTURES OF BLAKE & MORTIMER



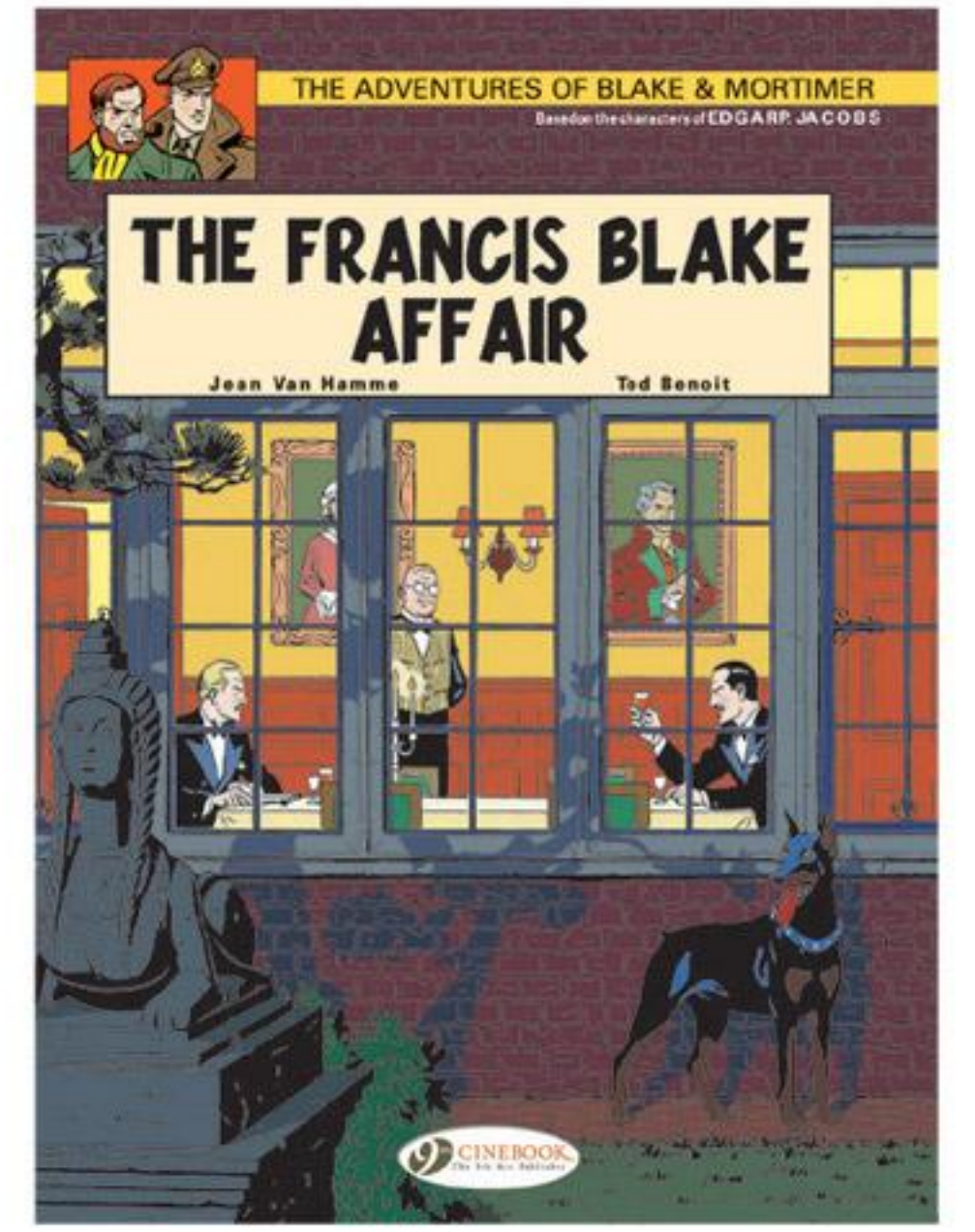
1-The Yellow "M"
EDGAR P. JACOBS



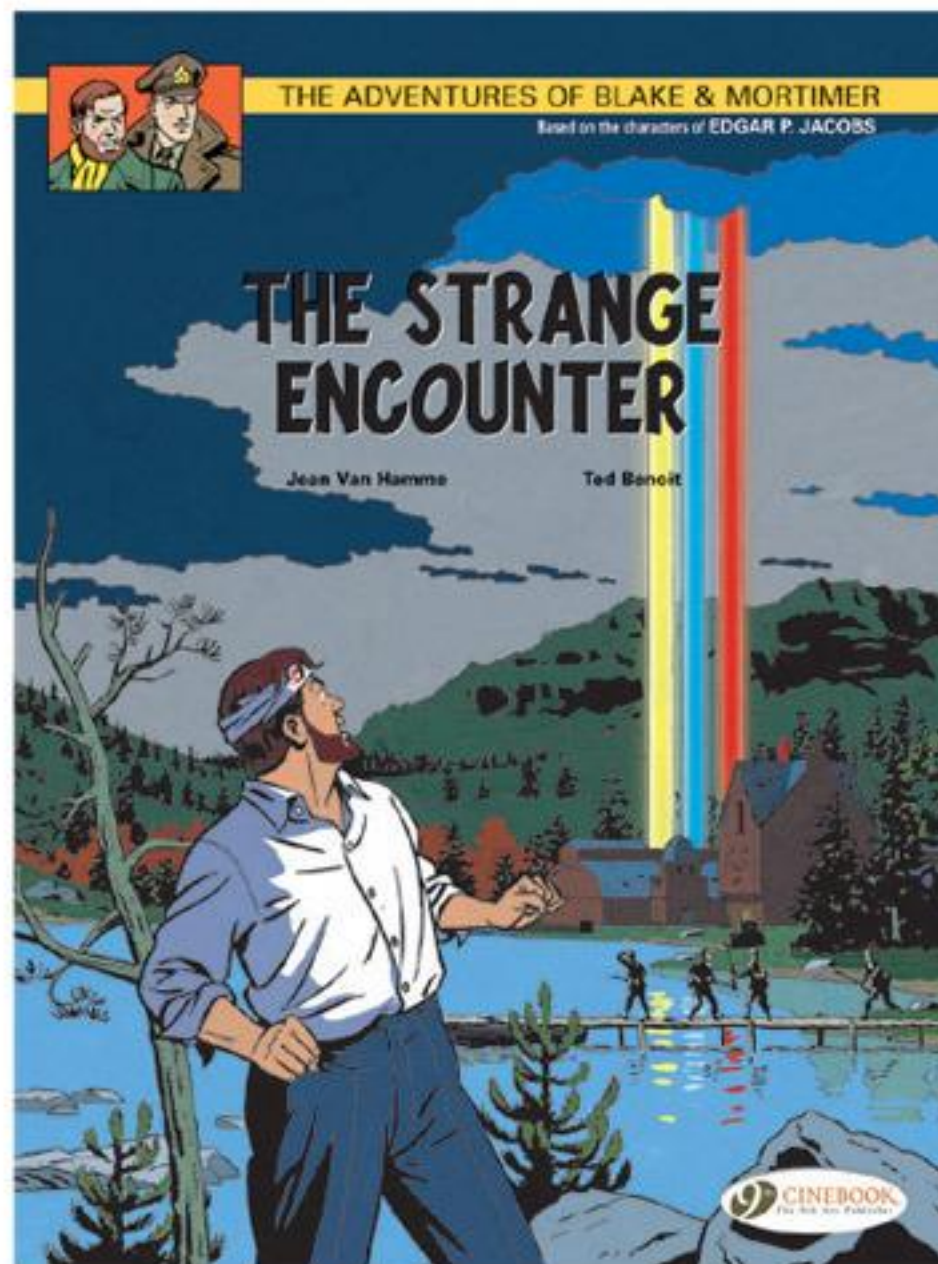
2-The Mystery of the Great Pyramid Part 1
EDGAR P. JACOBS



3-The Mystery of the Great Pyramid Part 2
EDGAR P. JACOBS



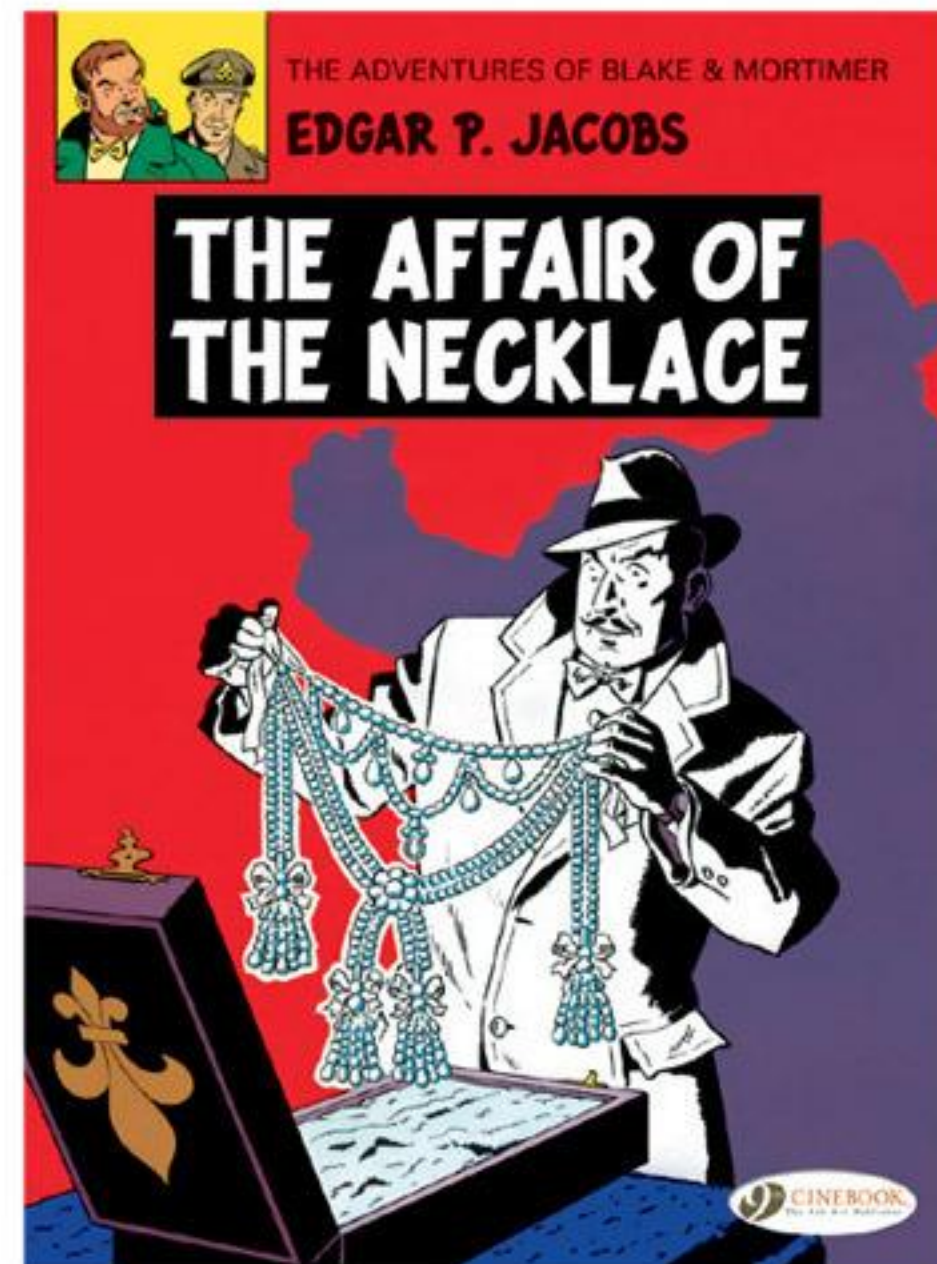
4-The Francis Blake Affair
VAN HAMME - BENOIT



5-The Strange Encounter
VAN HAMME - BENOIT



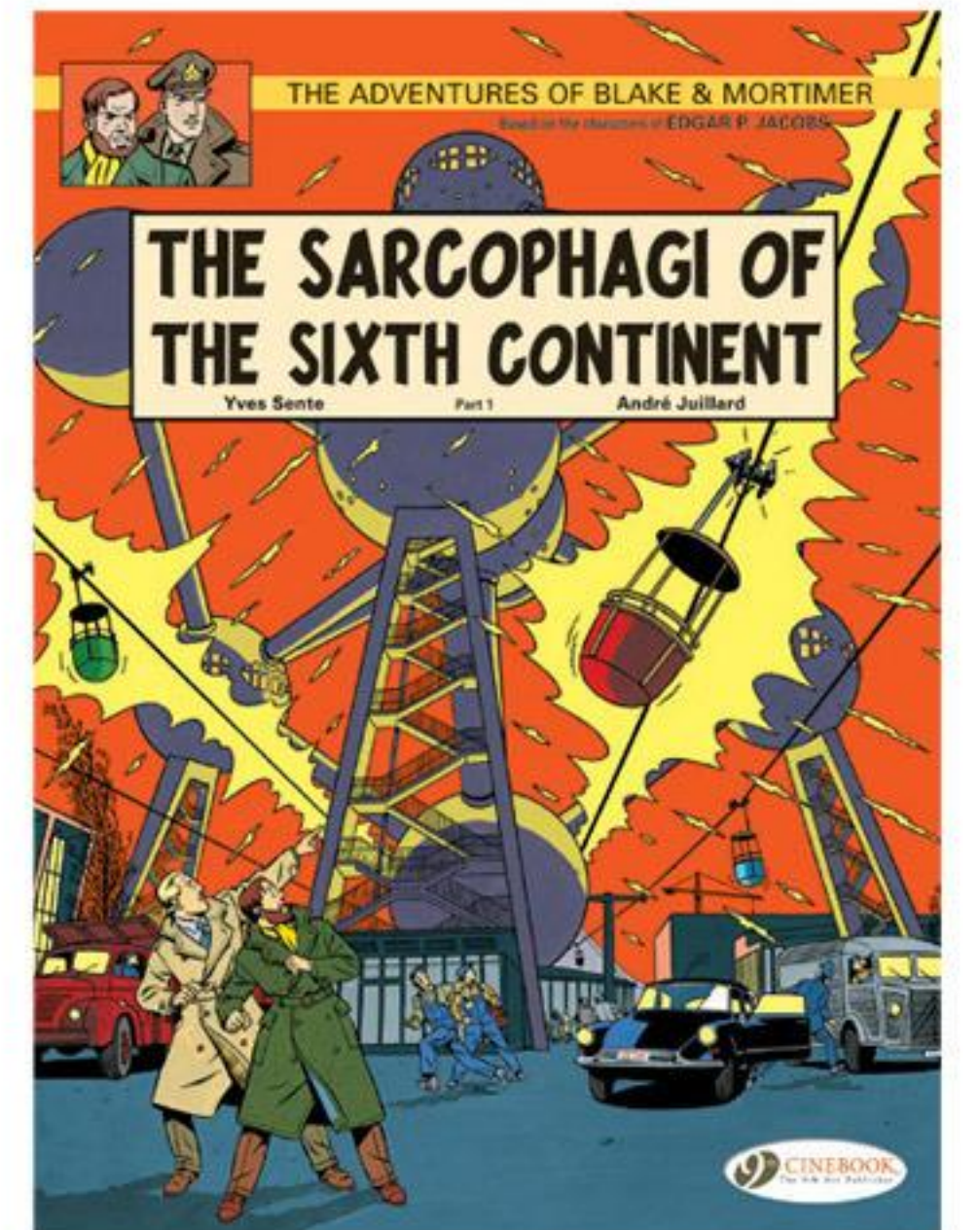
6-S.O.S. Meteors
EDGAR P. JACOBS



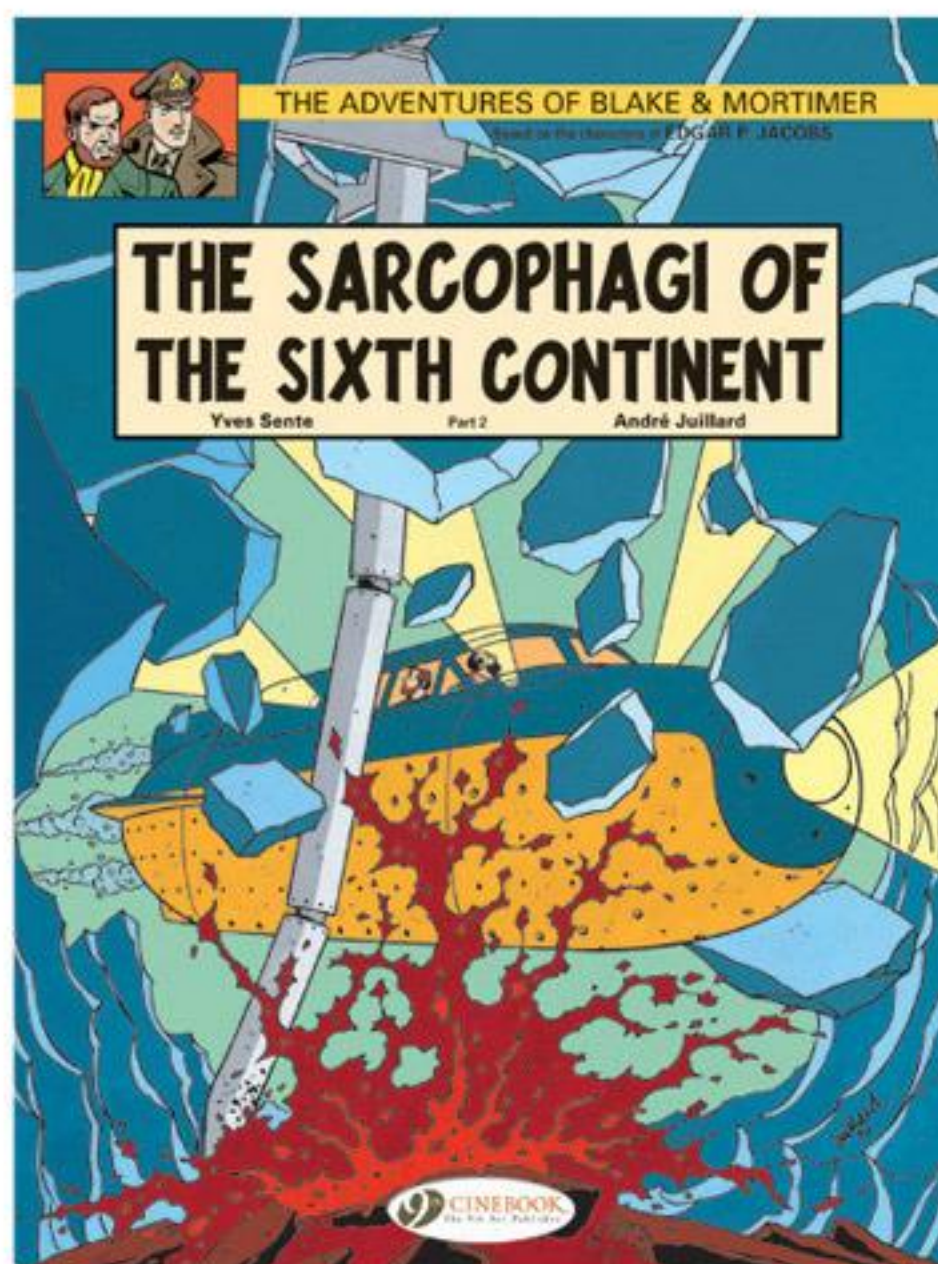
7-The Affair of the Necklace
EDGAR P. JACOBS



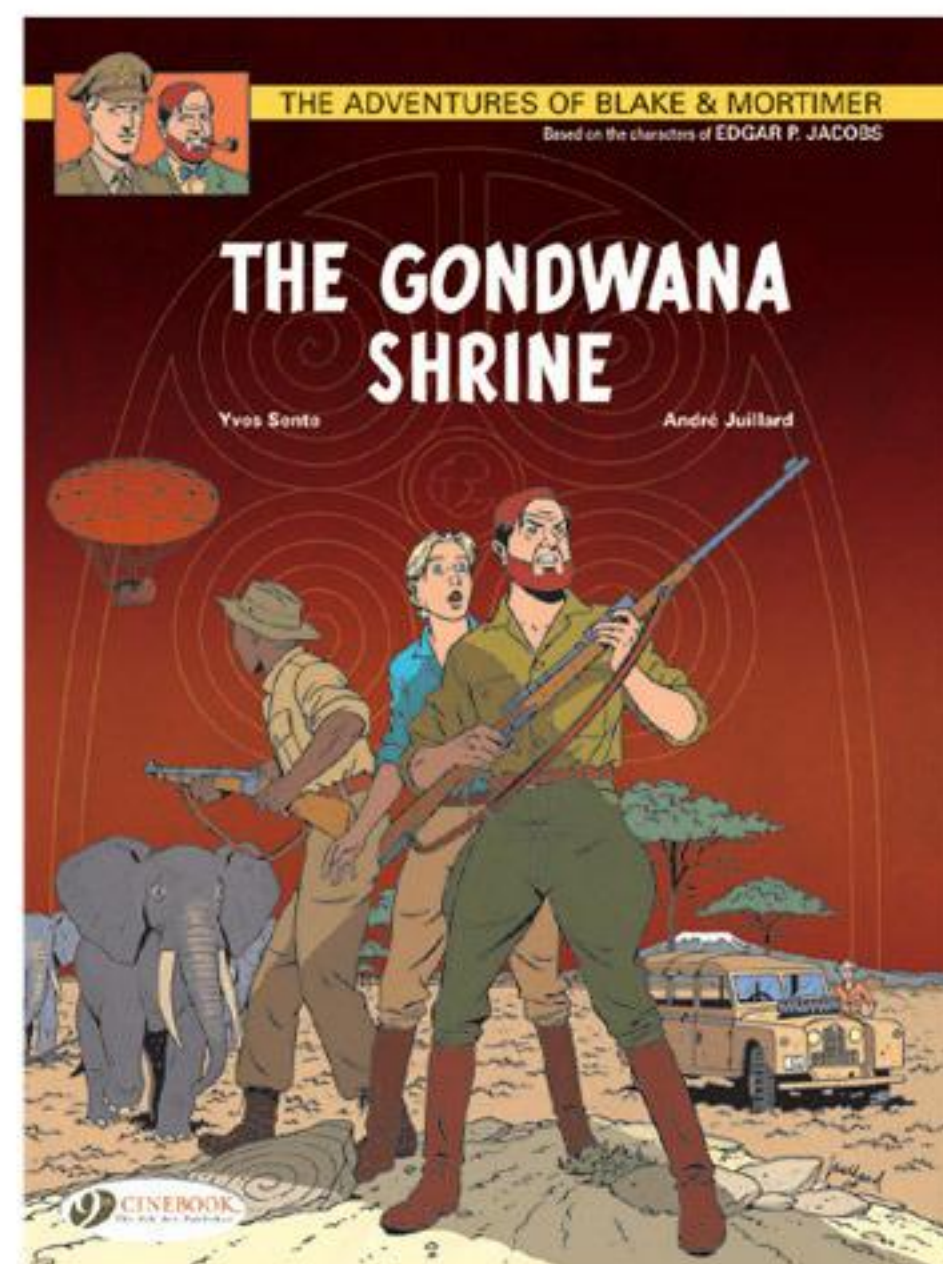
8-The Voronov Plot
SENTE - JUILLARD



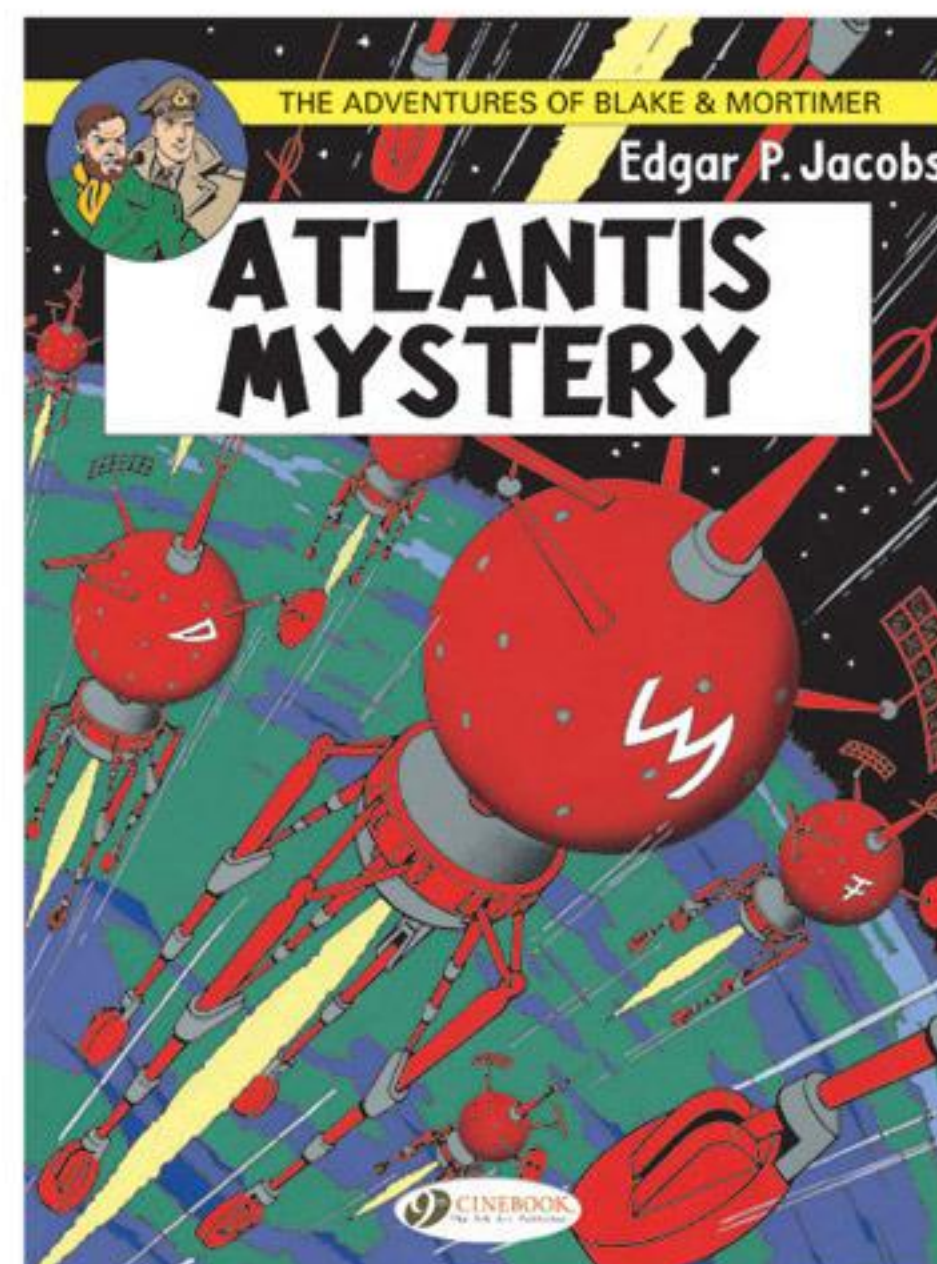
9-The Sarcophagi of the Sixth Continent Part 1
SENTE - JUILLARD



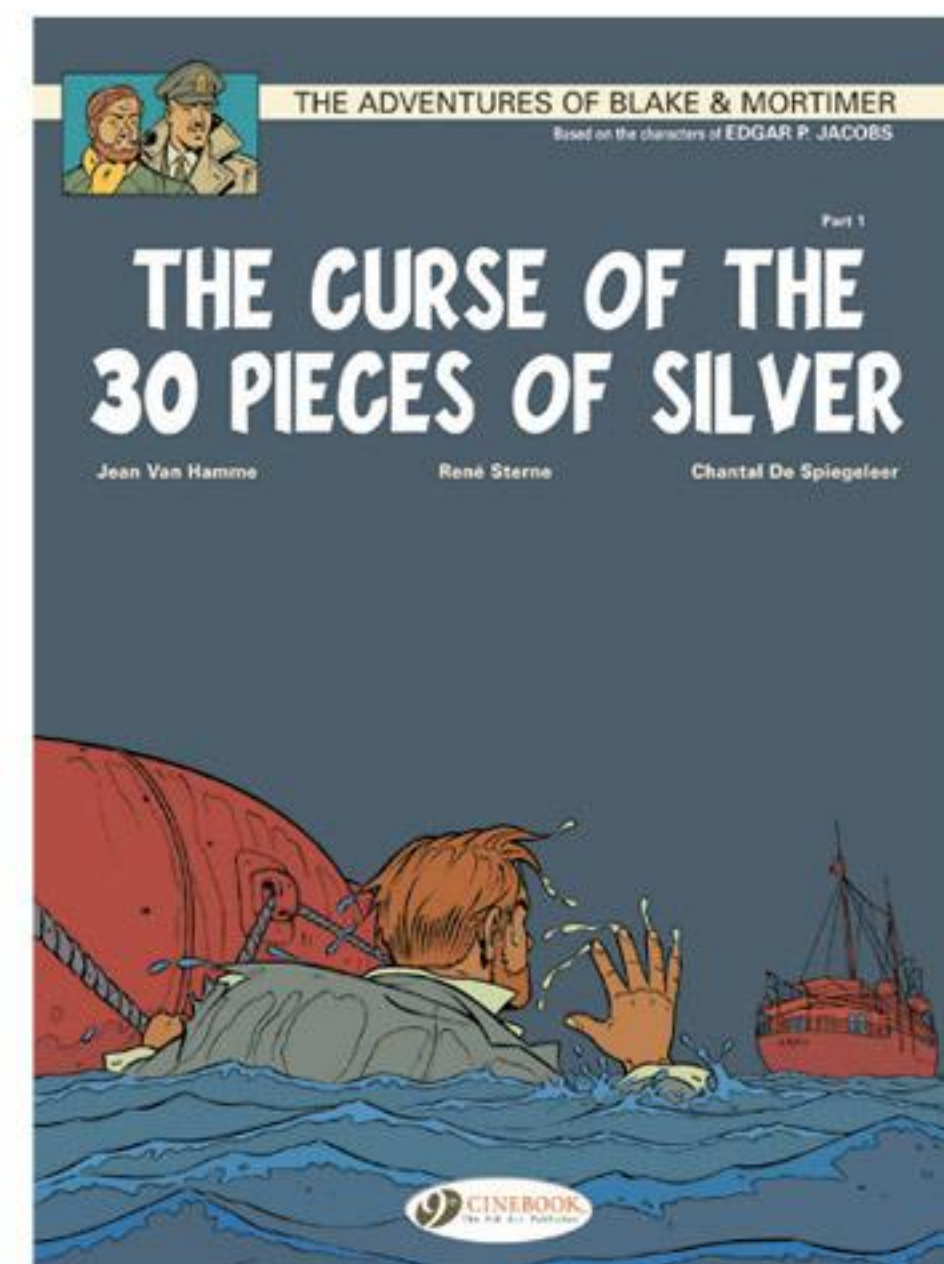
10-The Sarcophagi of the Sixth Continent Part 2
SENTE - JUILLARD



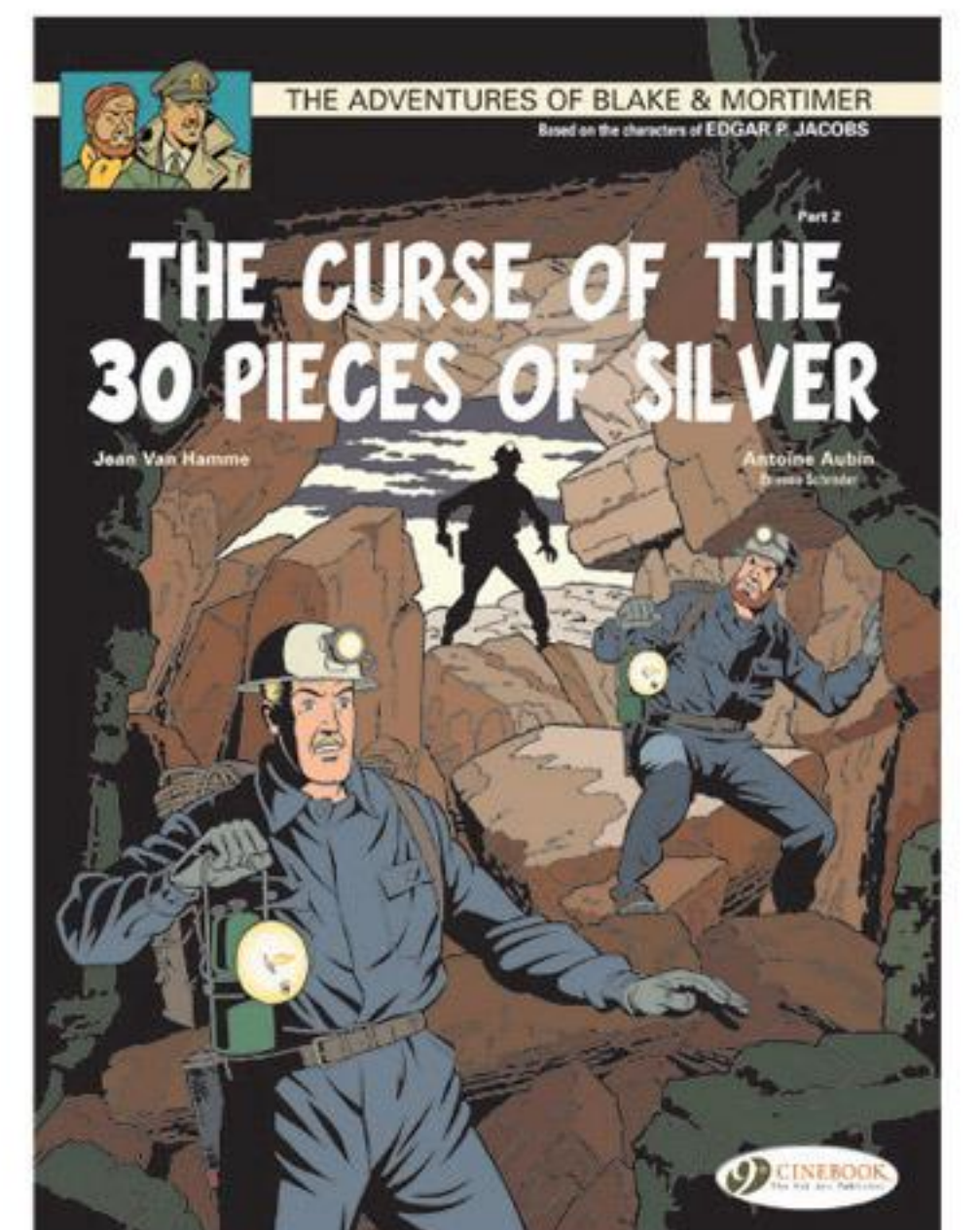
11-The Gondwana Shrine
SENTE - JUILLARD



12-Atlantis Mystery
EDGAR P. JACOBS

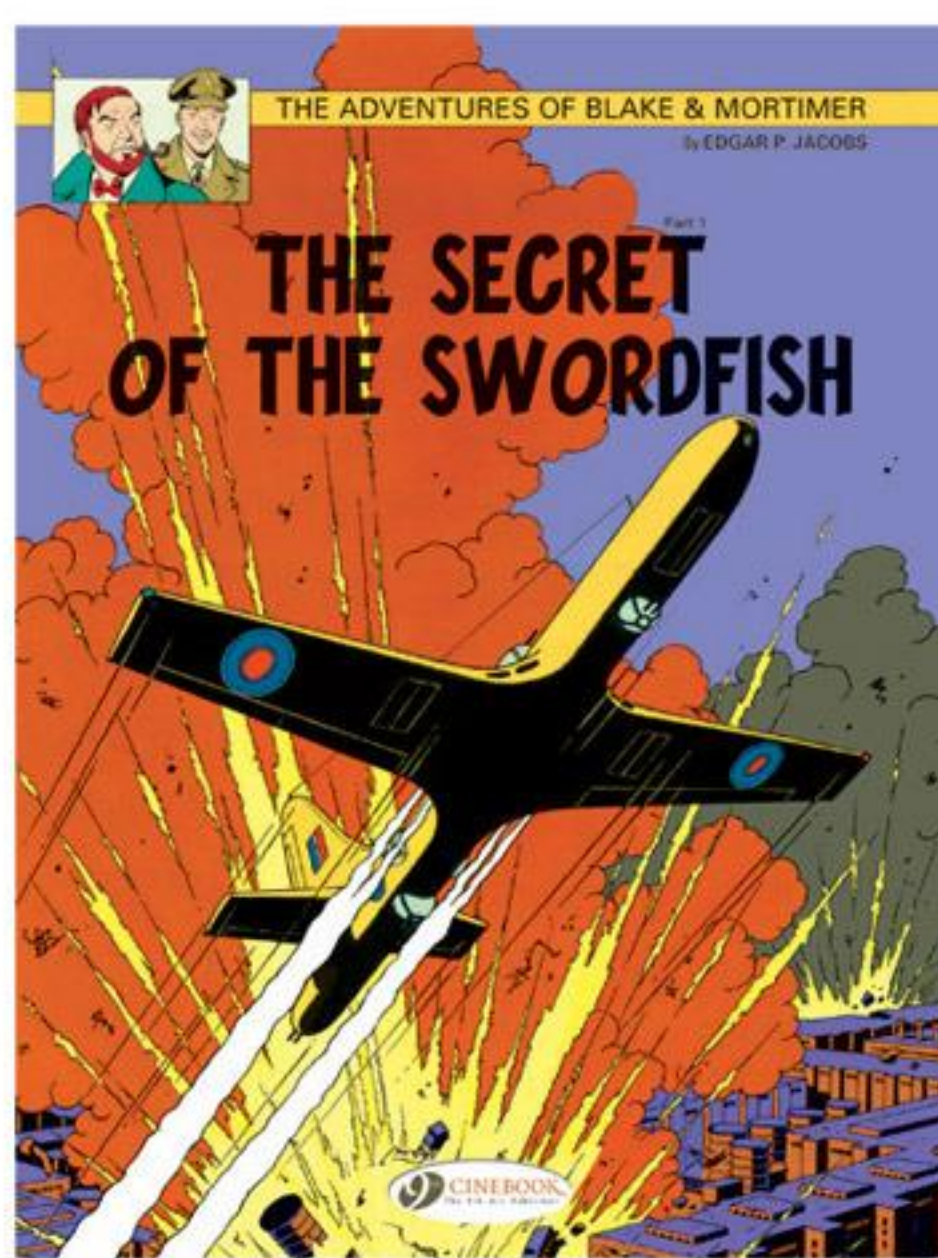


13-The Curse of the 30 Pieces of Silver Part 1
VAN HAMME - STERNE - DE SPIEGELEER

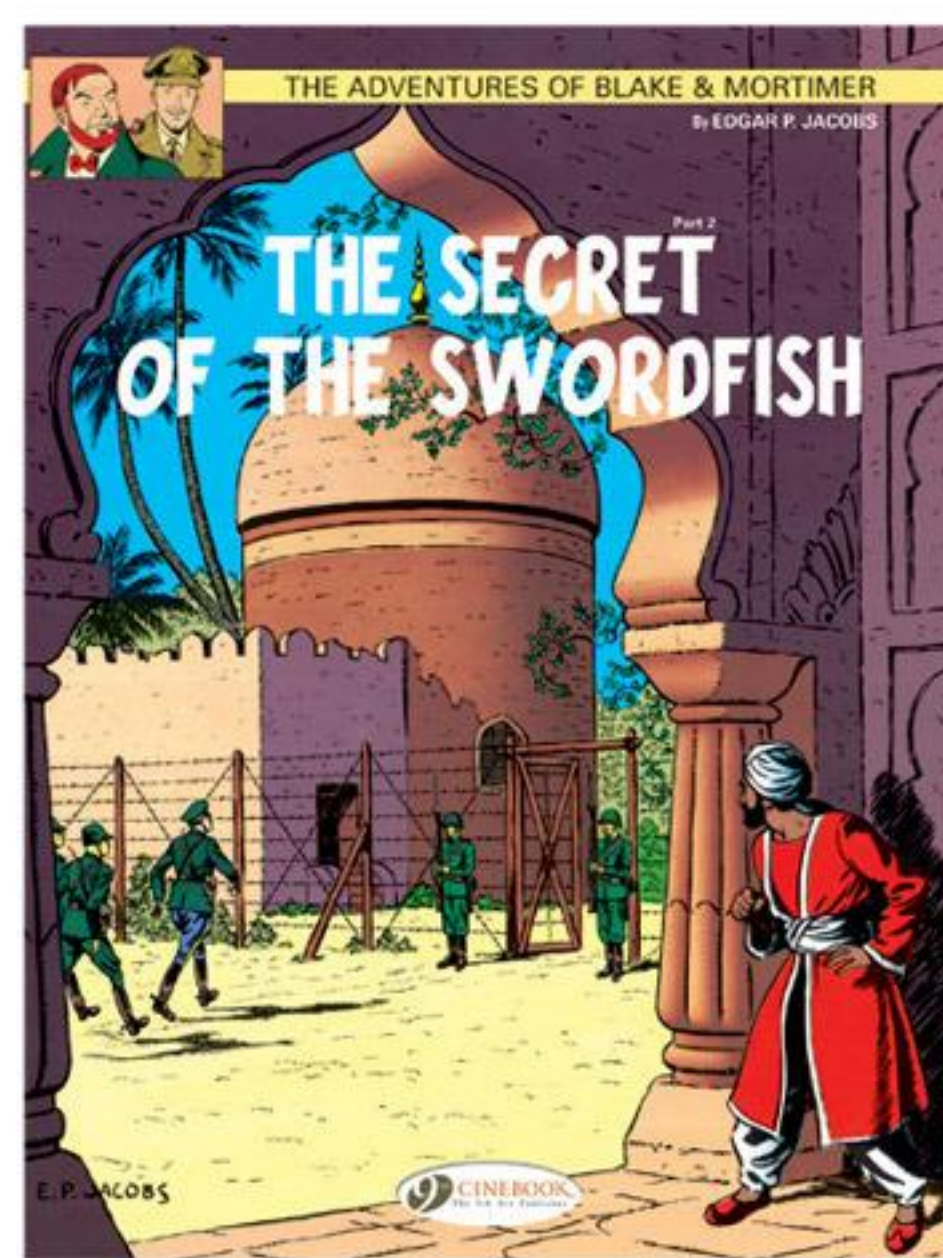


14-The Curse of the 30 Pieces of Silver Part 2
VAN HAMME - AUBIN - SCHREDER

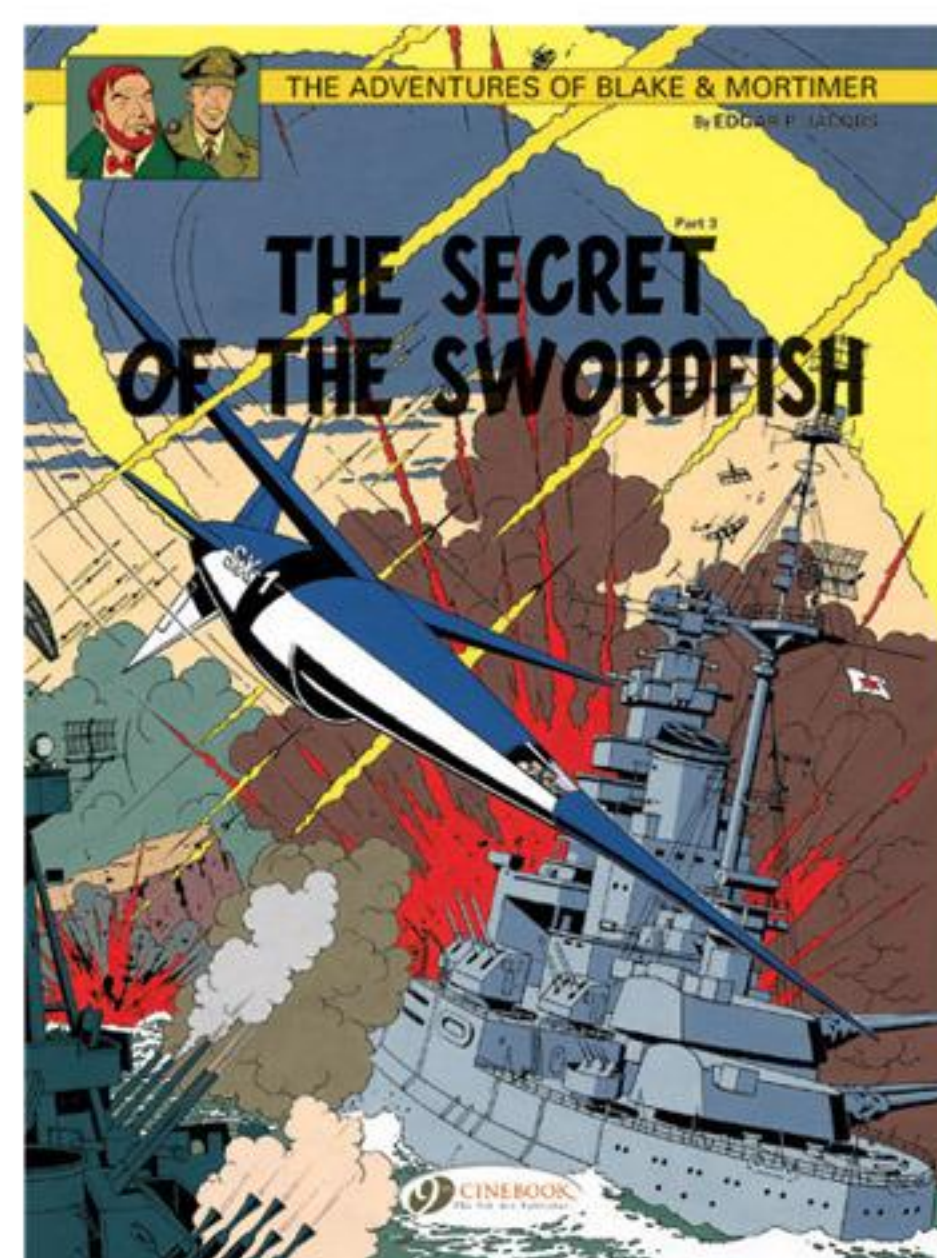
2013



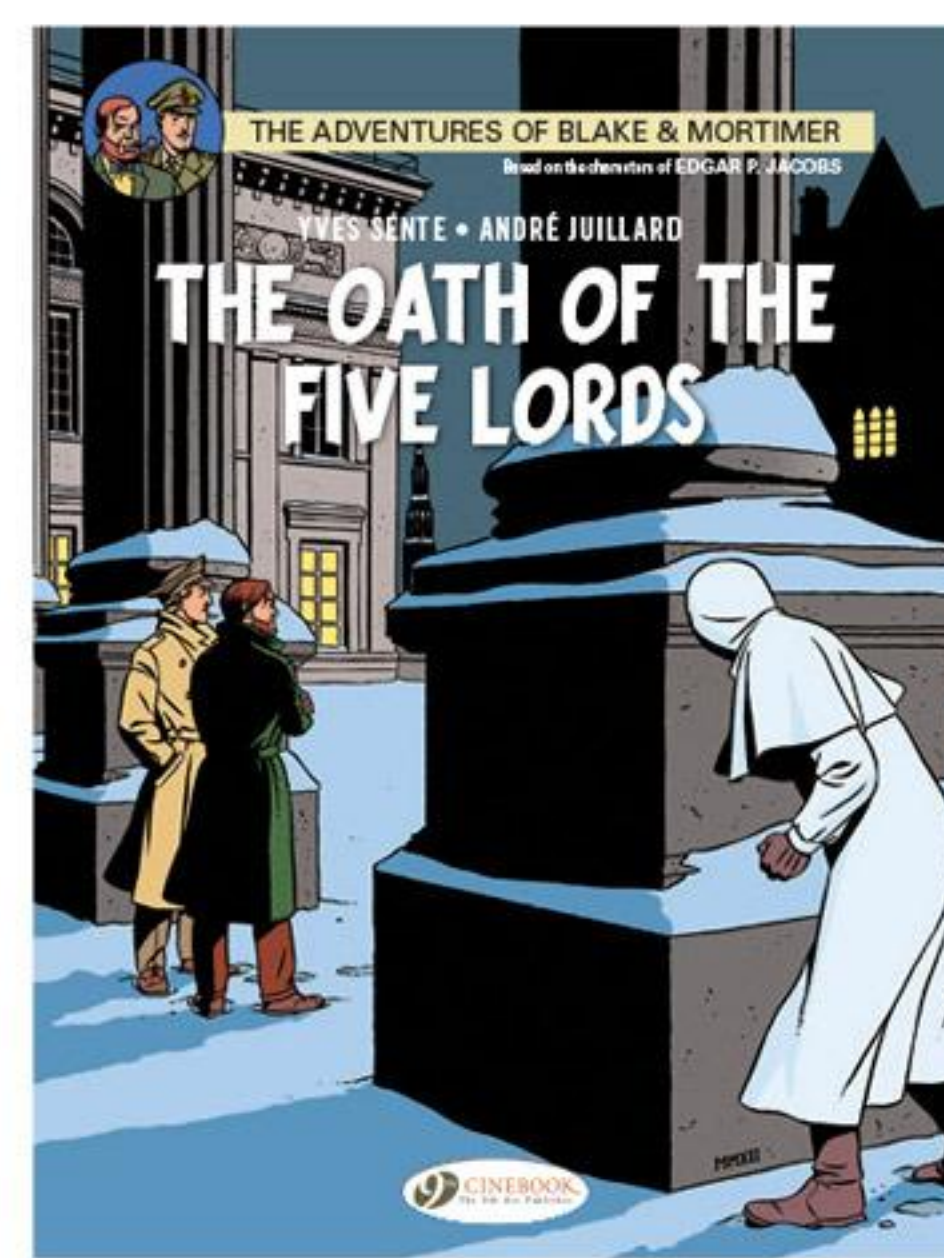
15-The Secret of the Swordfish Part 1
EDGAR P. JACOBS



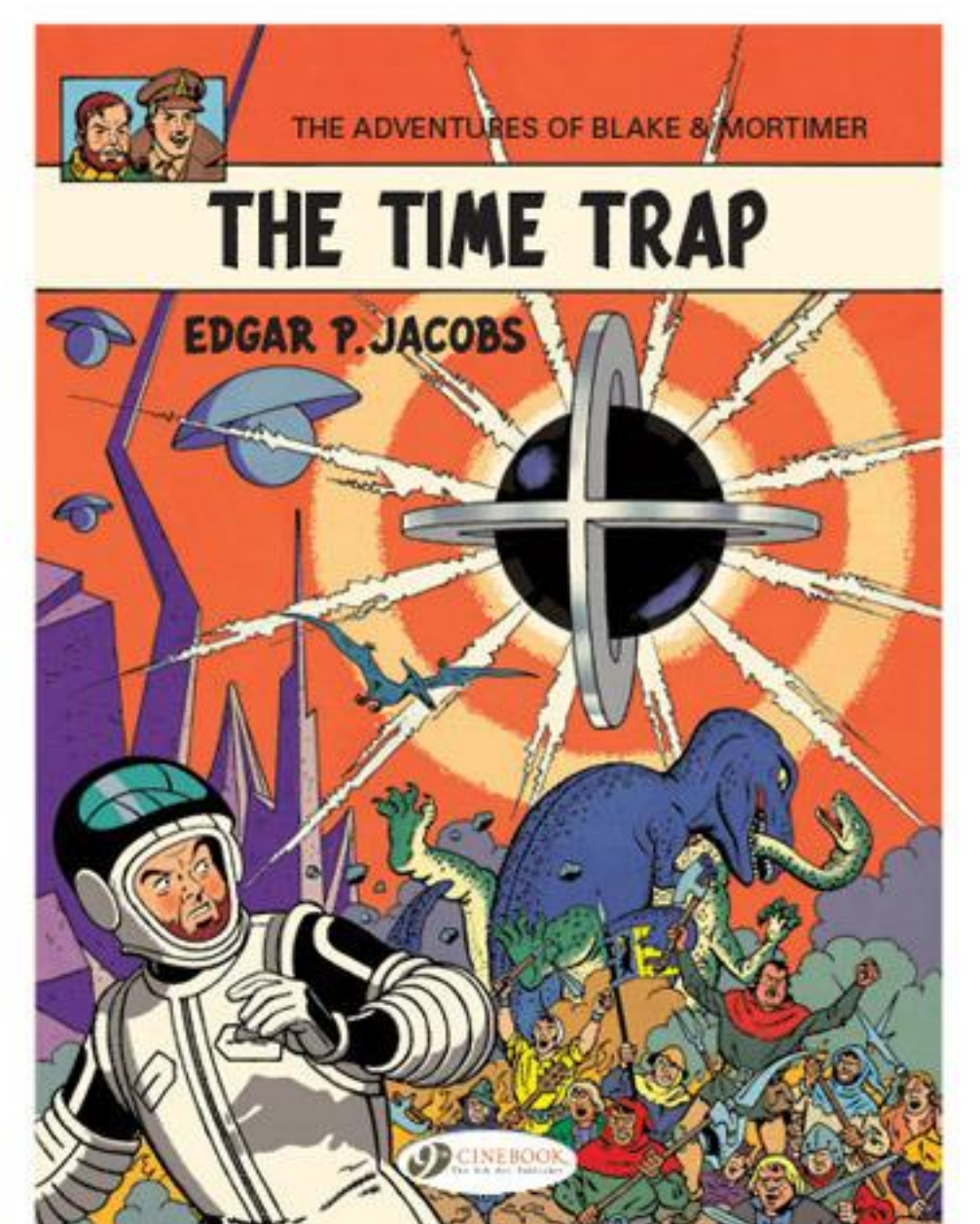
16-The Secret of the Swordfish Part 2
EDGAR P. JACOBS



17-The Secret of the Swordfish Part 3
EDGAR P. JACOBS



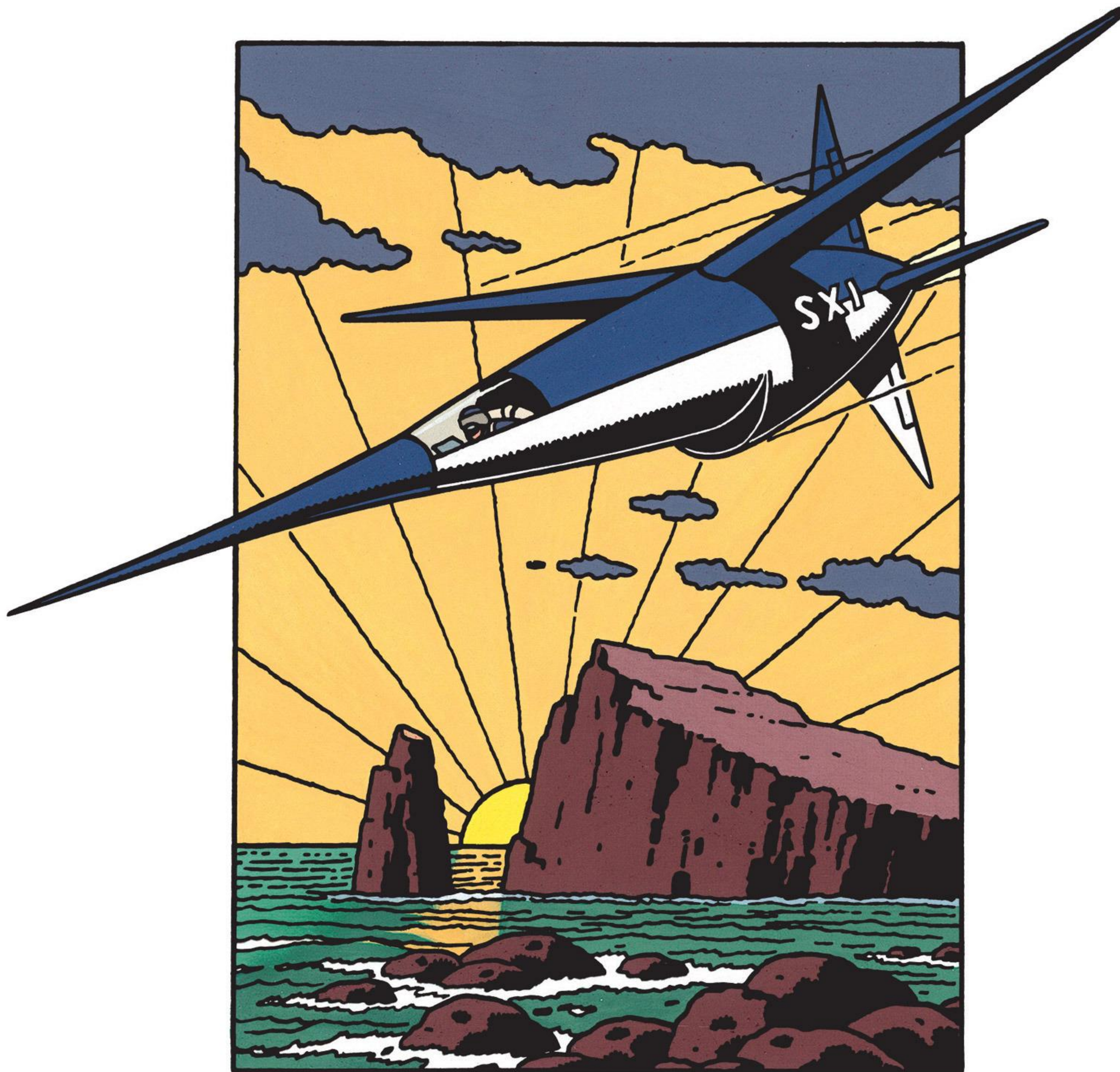
18-The Oath of the Five Lords
SENTE - JUILLARD



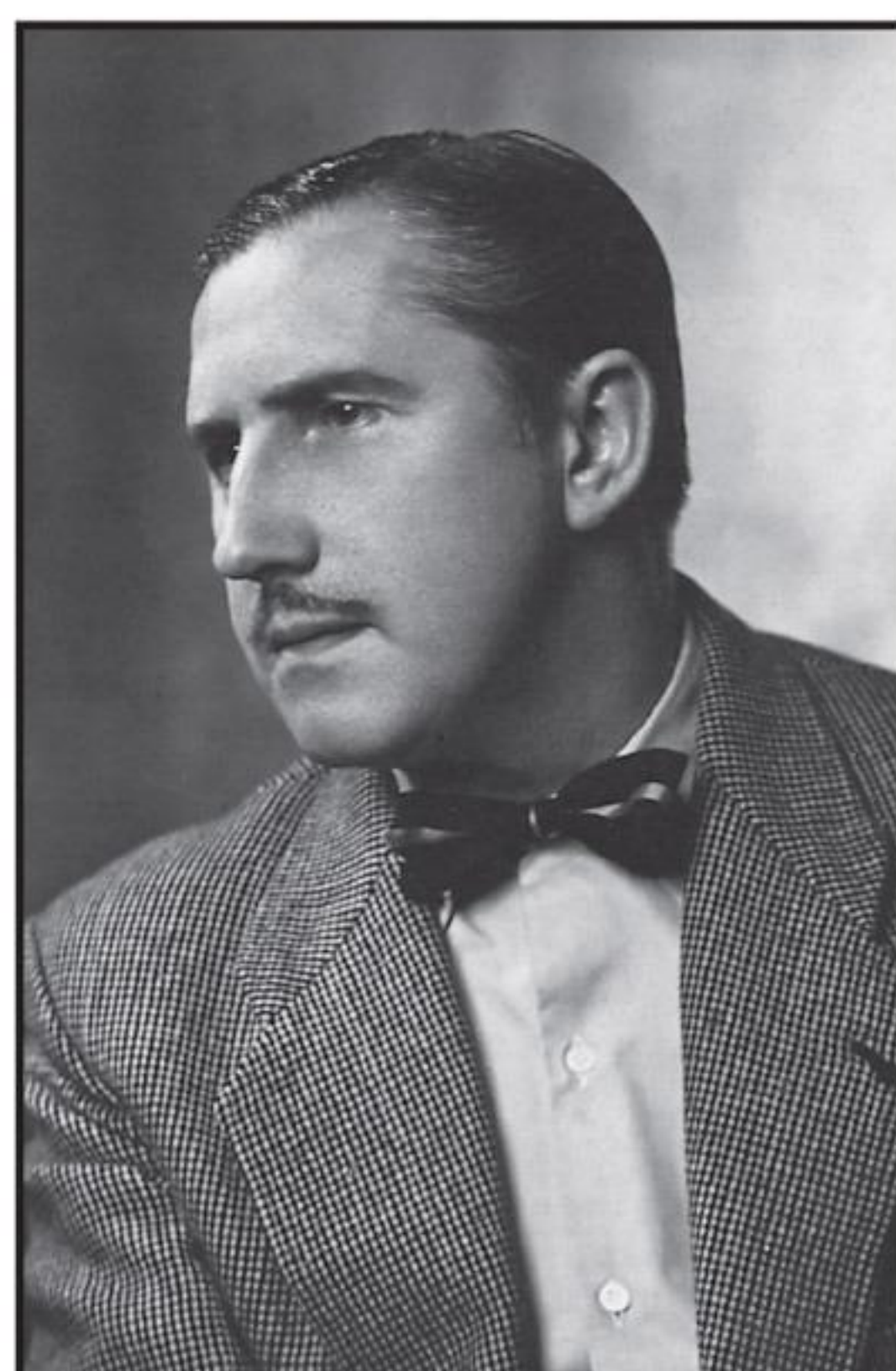
19-The Time Trap
EDGAR P. JACOBS

2014

THE CONCLUSION TO BLAKE & MORTIMER'S EPIC FIRST ADVENTURE: SX1 STRIKES BACK!



© Editions Blake & Mortimer / Studio Jacobs (Dargaud-Lombard s.a.) - E.P. Jacobs



EDGAR P. JACOBS – 1946

THE SECRET ^{Part 3} OF THE SWORDFISH

October 2013

PUBLISHED BY





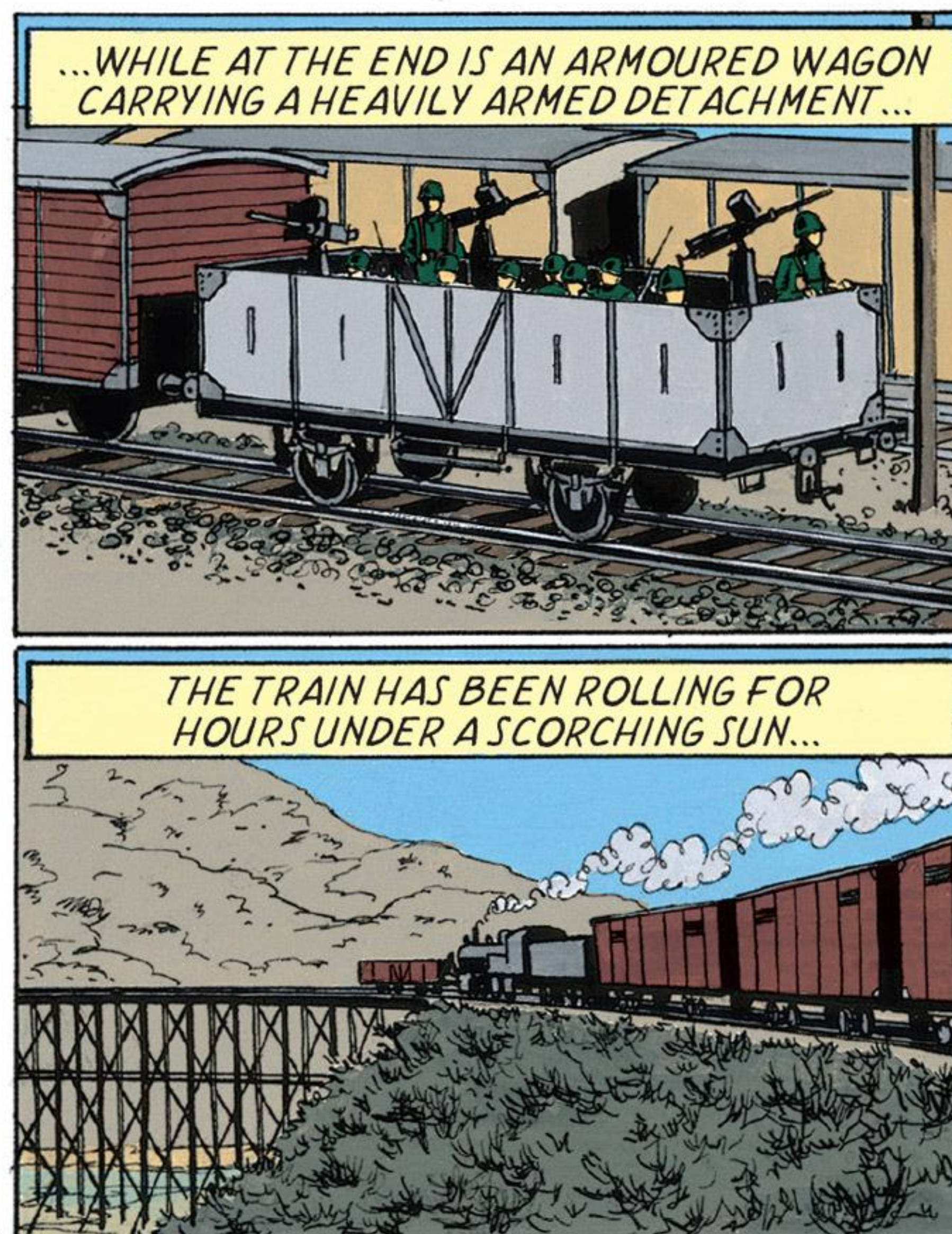
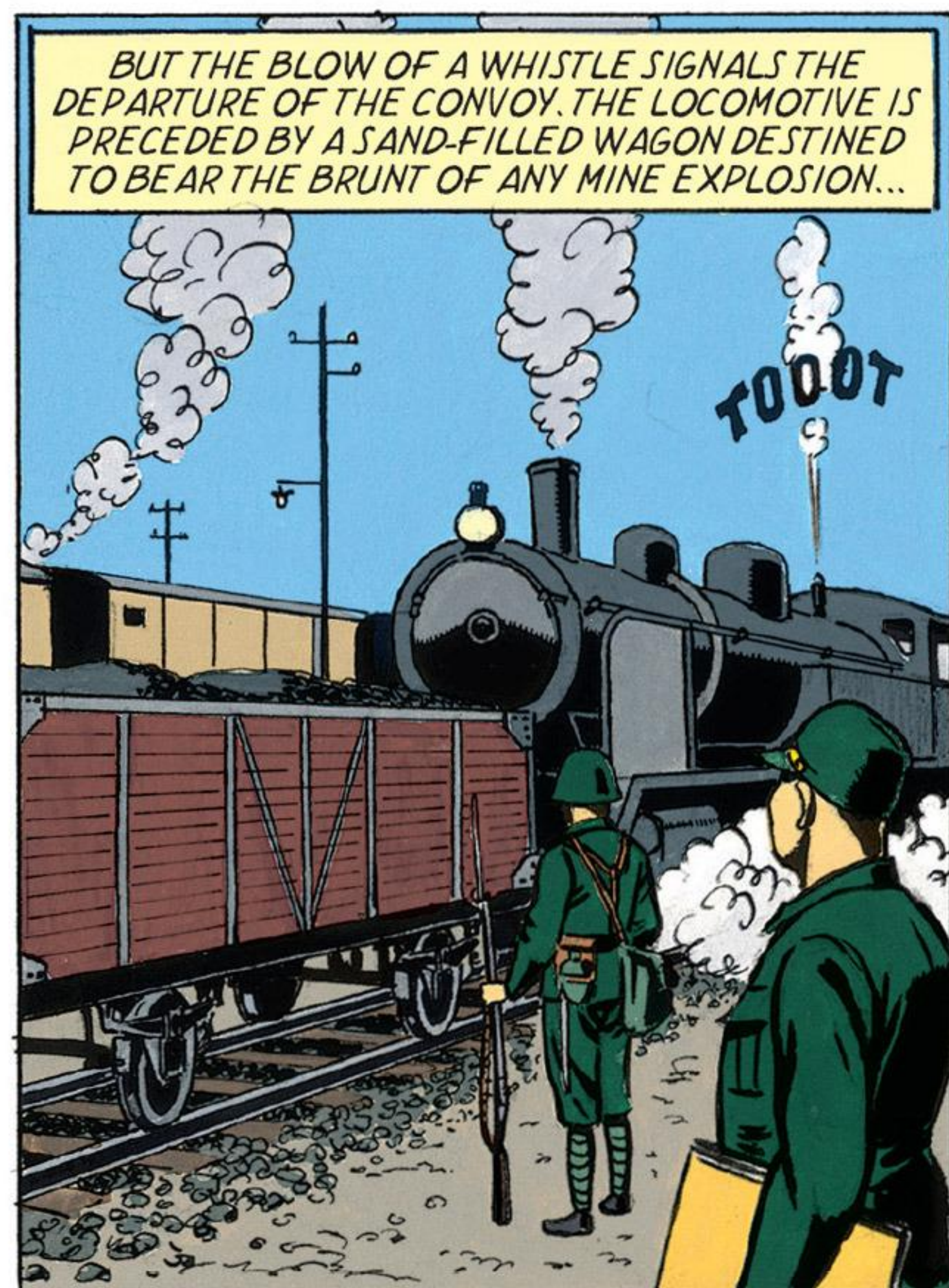
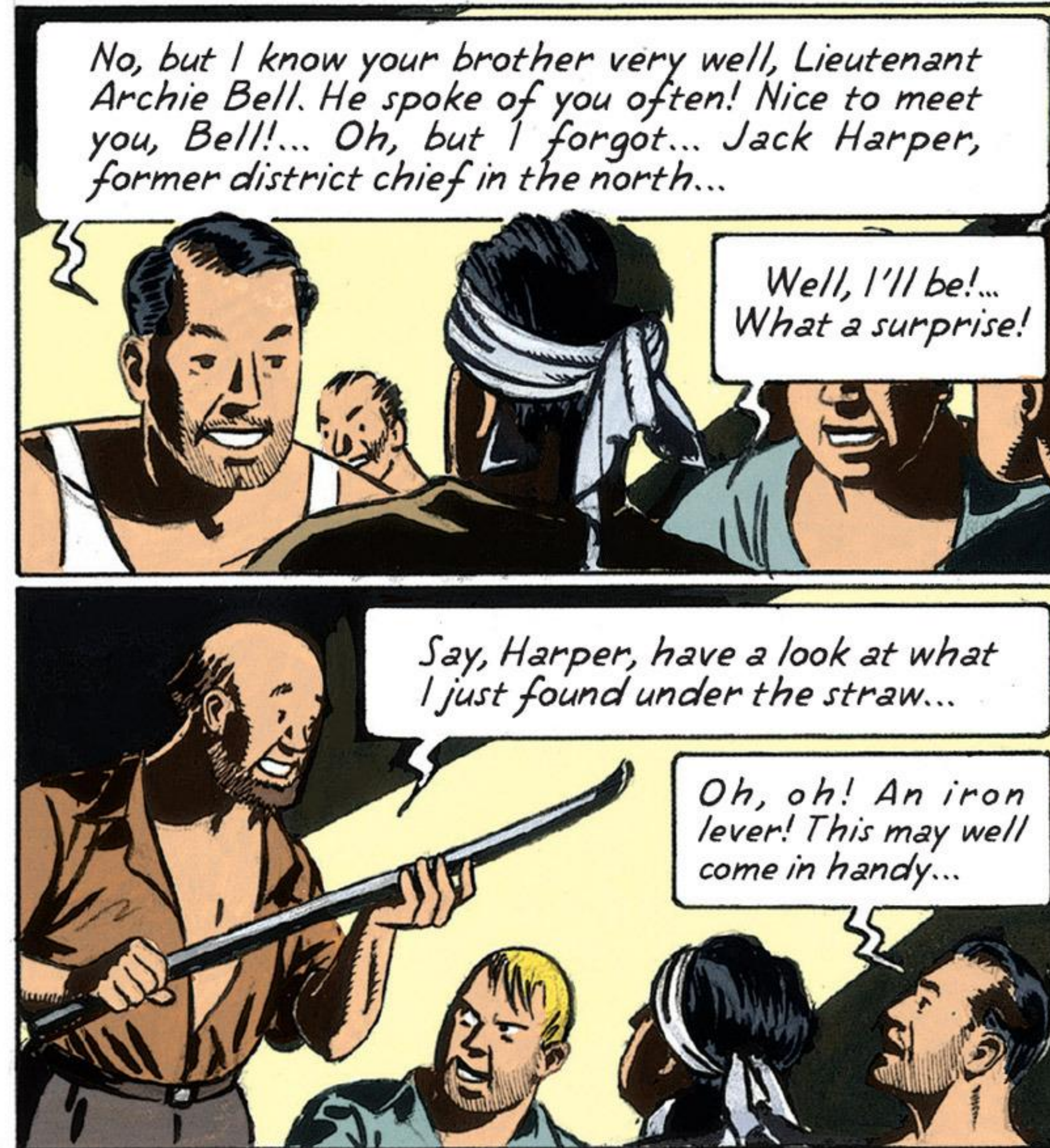
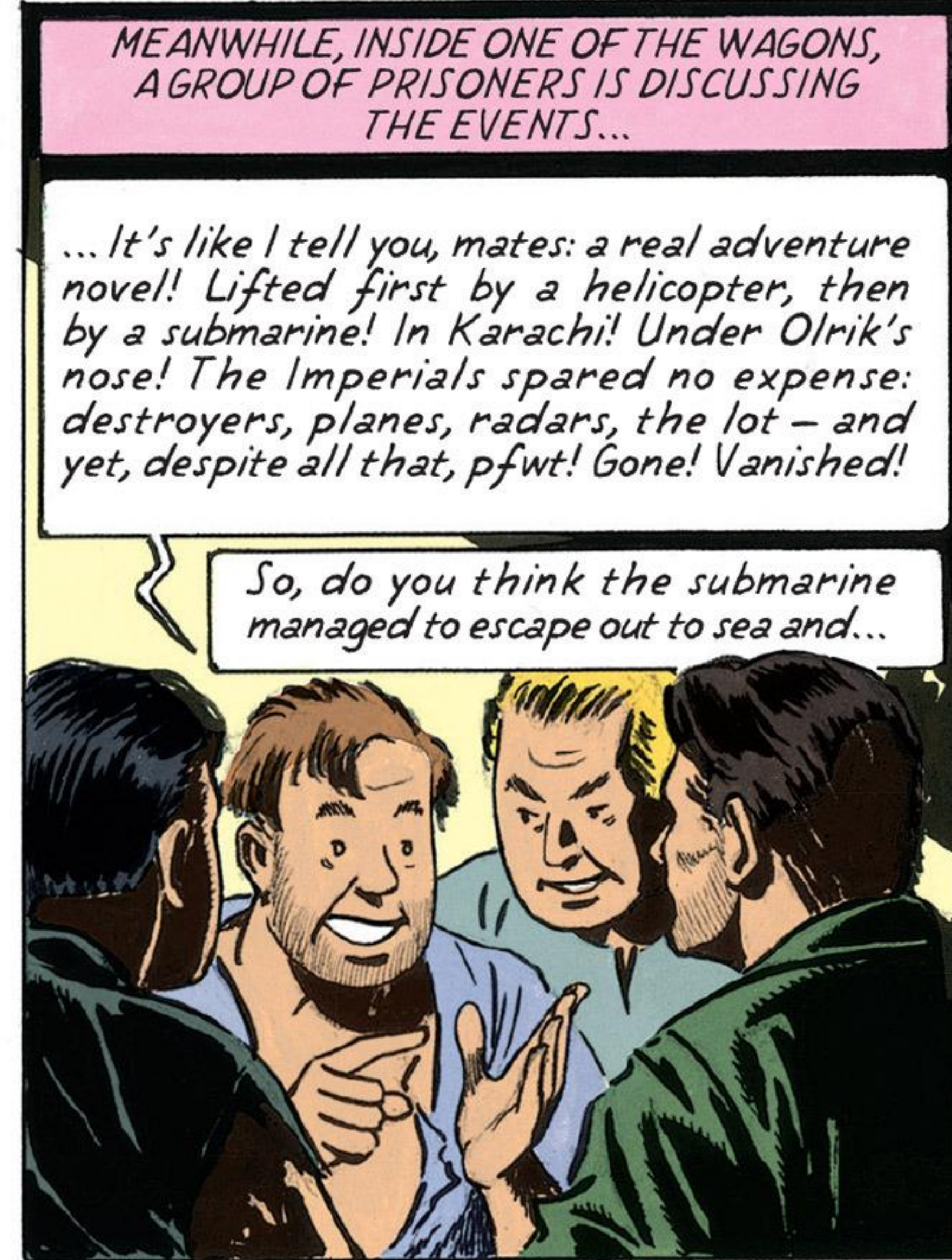
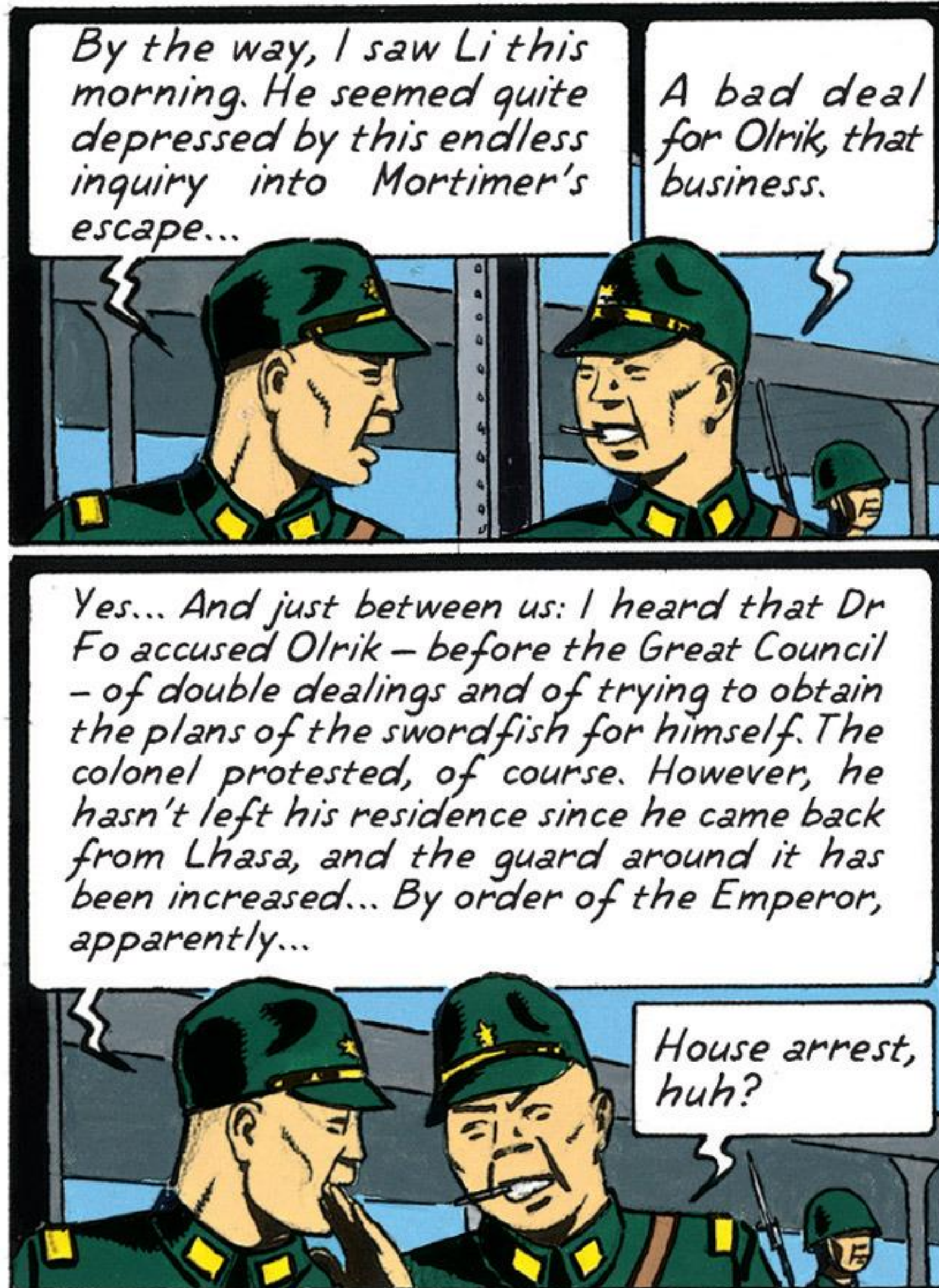
THE ADVENTURES OF BLAKE & MORTIMER

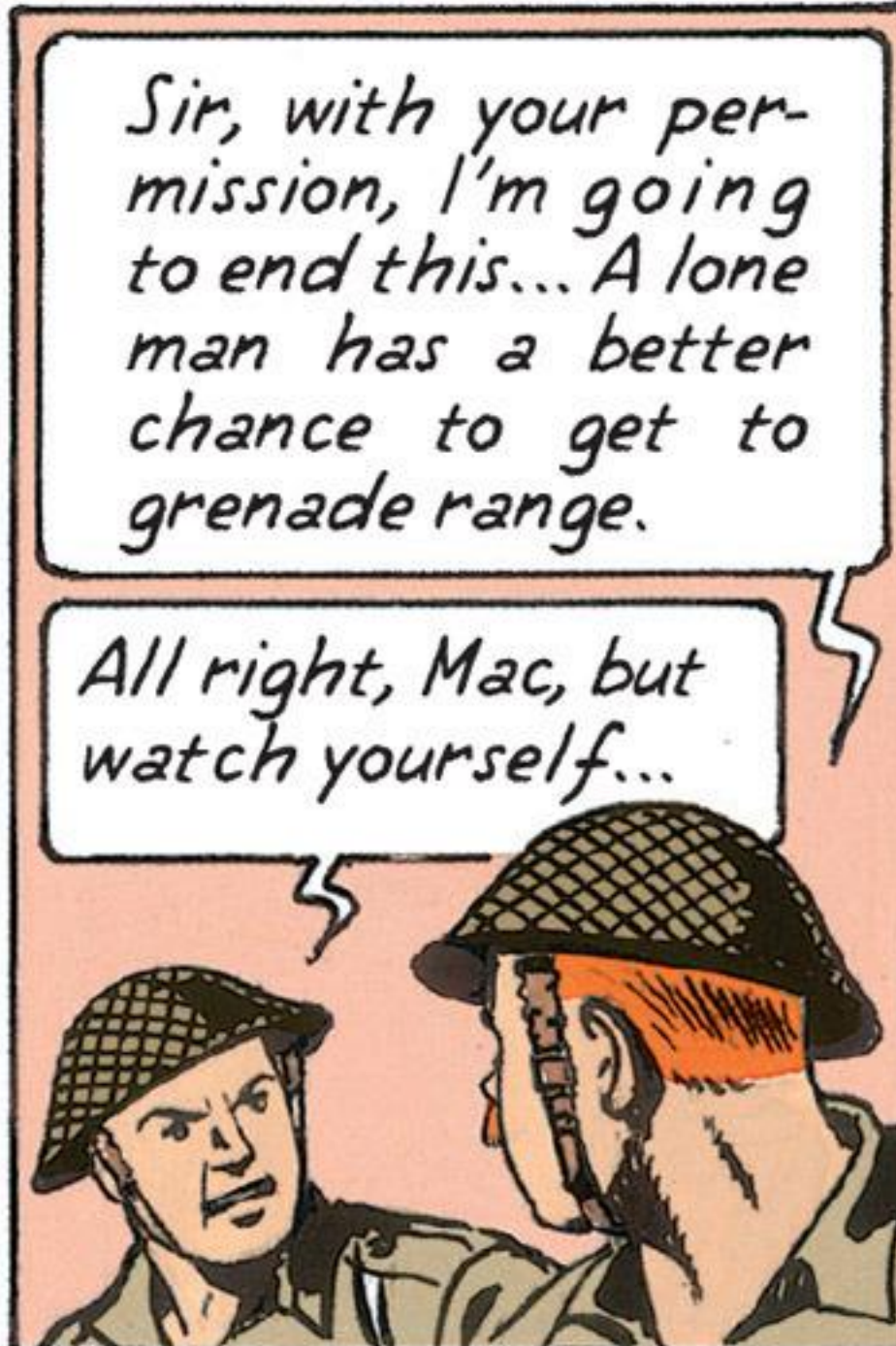
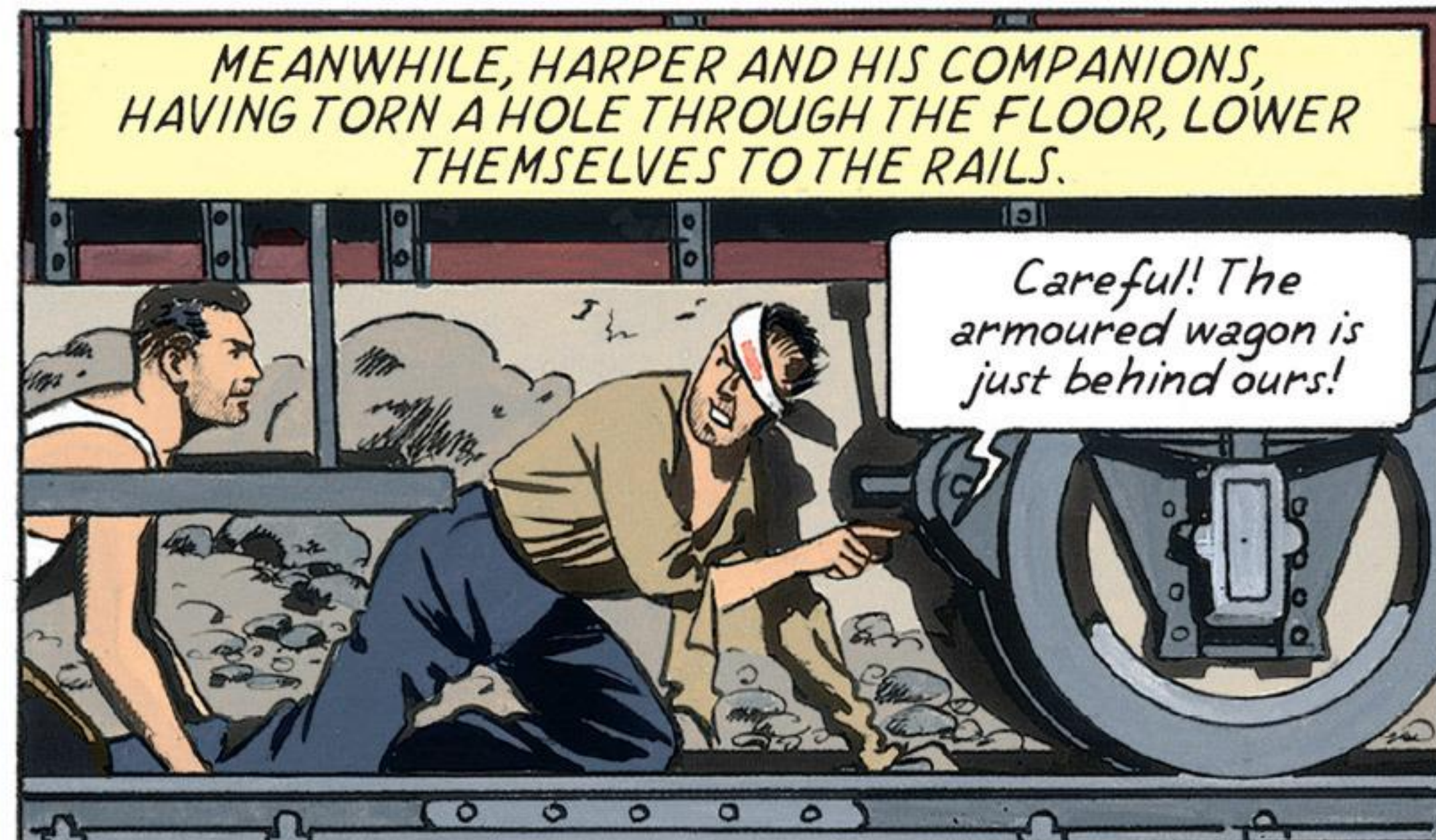
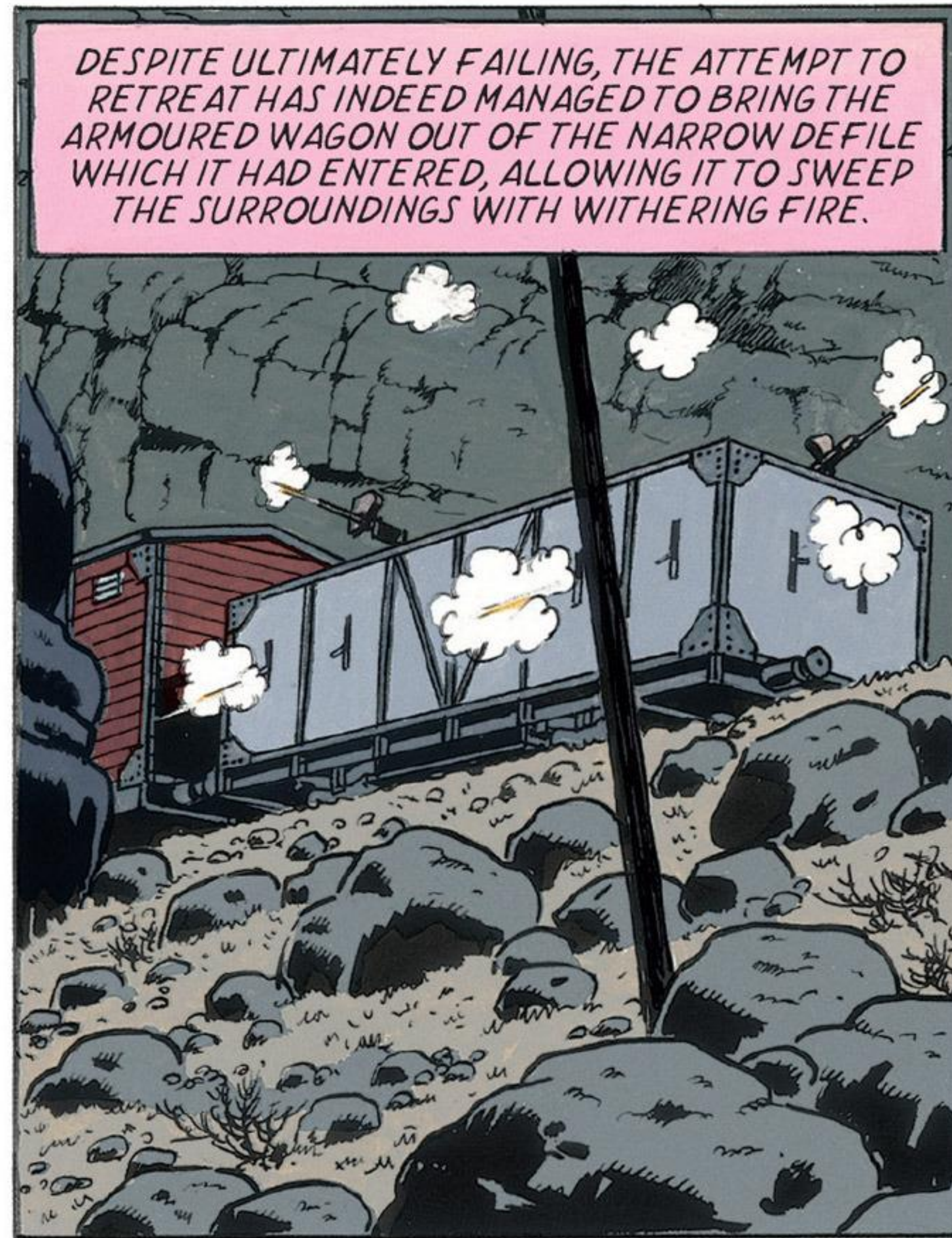
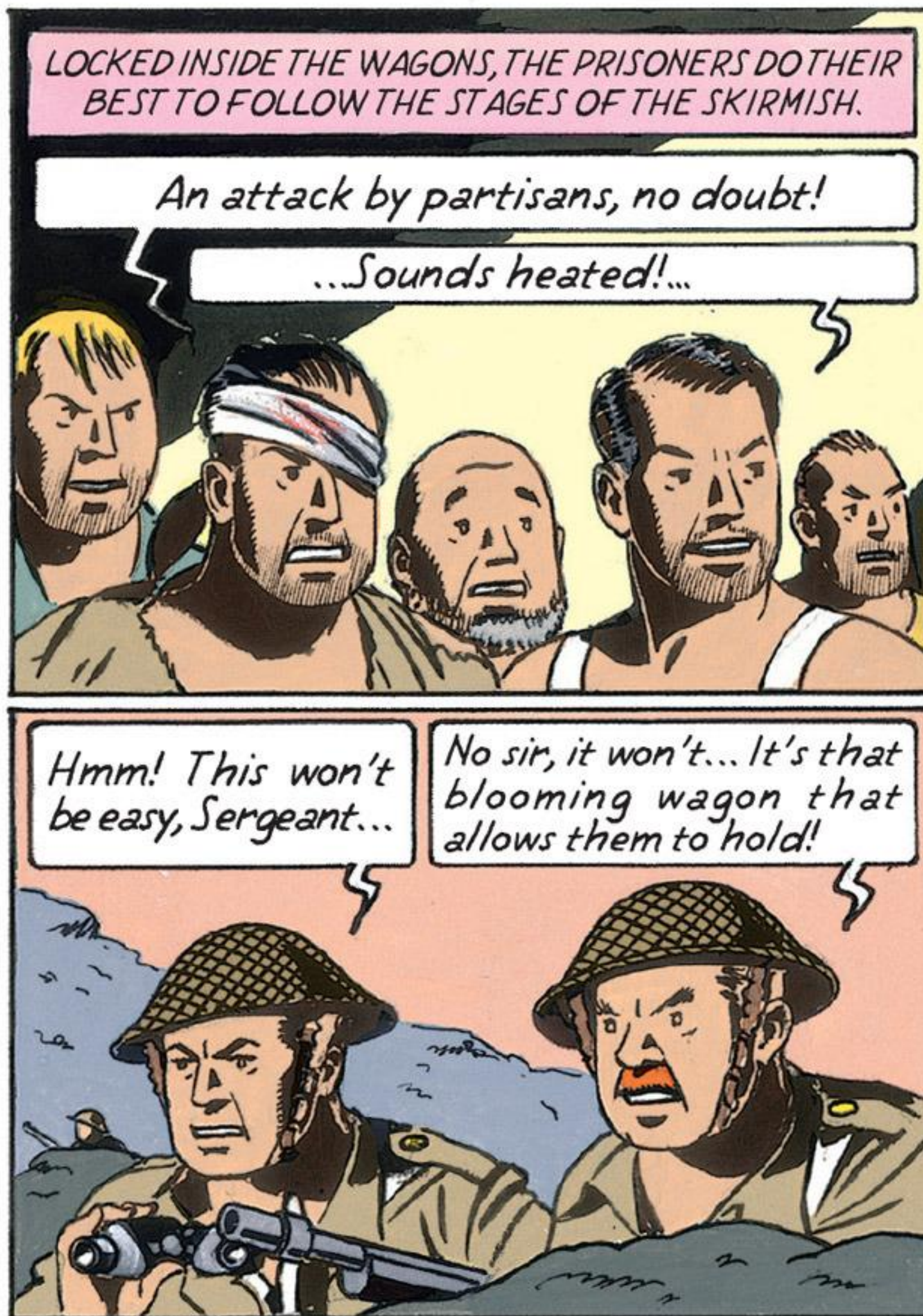
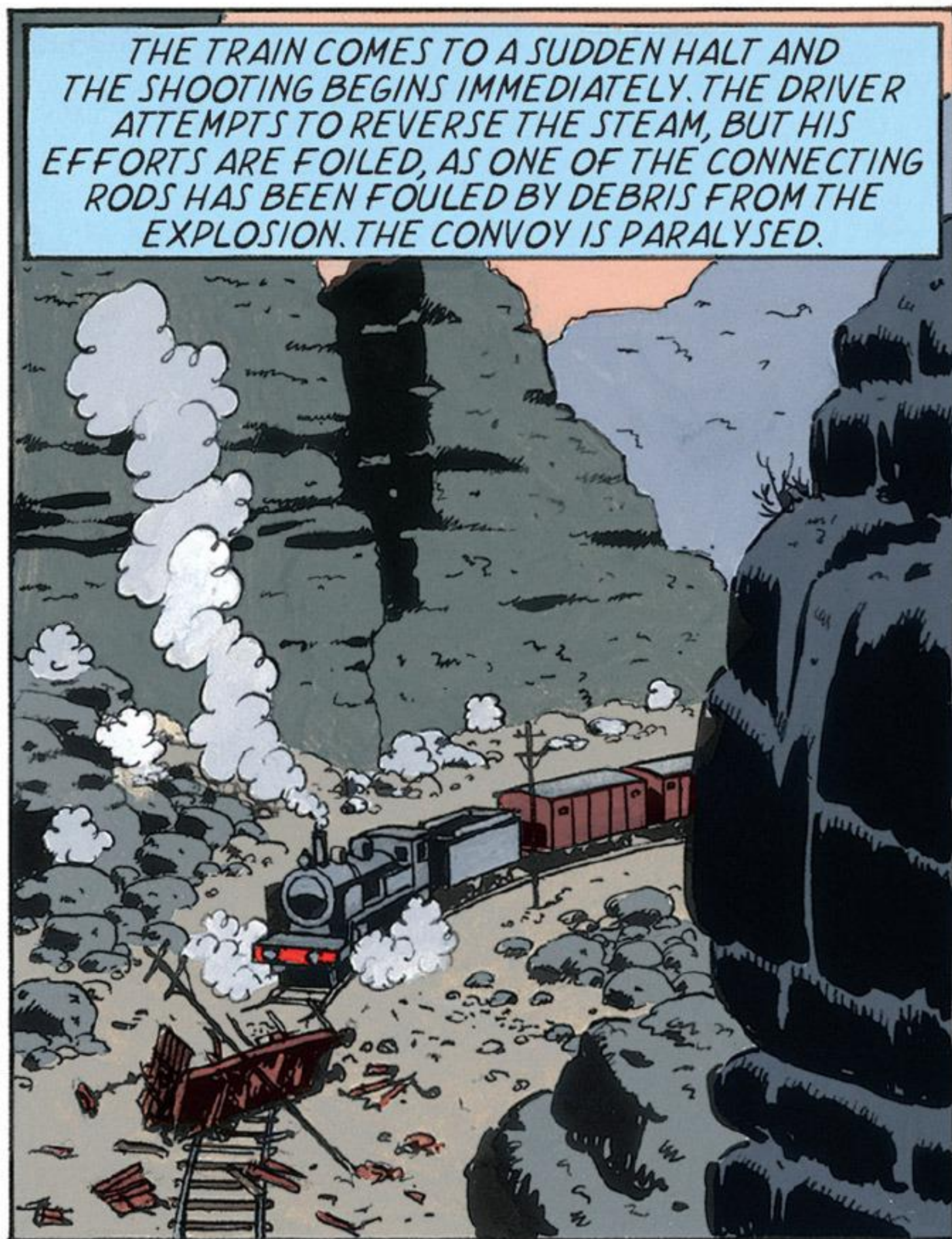
By EDGAR P. JACOBS

Part 3

THE SECRET OF THE SWORDFISH







**WHEN EXTREME WEATHER THREATENS EUROPE,
MORTIMER IS CALLED TO THE RESCUE BY
THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT.**



© Editions Blake & Mortimer / Studio Jacobs (Dargaud-Lombard s.a.) - E.P. Jacobs

Cold wave over Europe

Heavy damage to crops in France,
Great Britain and Italy

London, May 6 (AFP)

A series of snowstorms

nday. Er

serious

reat Bri

It is a

Crops th

Lombard

lowing

atu

eo

Of

THE H BOMB Is it responsible for the bad weather?

Professor Frederic Soddy, who

received the Nobel Prize for hi

discovery of isot

radioactiv

t be

Coal industry encountering
problems caused by cold

Luxembourg

Catastrophic situation in the edmont Aosta Valley

The whole Southeast of
victim of torrential rains

Violent storms over France

Waters rose and flooded over half

FOR SEVERAL LONG MONTHS, METEOROLOGICAL PHENOMENA
OF ALARMING SEVERITY HAVE BEEN PLAGUING WESTERN
EUROPE AND WREAKING HAVOC ON THE LIVES OF MILLIONS
OF PEOPLE... AFTER A LONG AND DEADLY WINTER, TEMPERA-
TURES ARE FINALLY RISING... ALAS! THE THAWING OF THE
SNOW IS ACCOMPANIED BY TORRENTIAL RAINS, BRINGING A
FRESH CALAMITY: FLOODING! AND THE WATERS RISE, RISE
INEXORABLY!

Flooding throughout France

of Val-d'Isère, doing considerable damage

Sunspots are causing the bad weather

Snowstorm over the Balearic Islands

Madrid, February 22 (AFP)

The third cold wave

in Spain took the sha

snowstorms that especially

affected the provinces of

central and east

f snow did

etres

or trav

lea

of

own

that

of t

not

least what the meteo-
are claiming

ological. Sinc

Violent demonstration by unemployed people in Foggia

Risks of flooding in Germany

Snow and the risk of flooding

are still threatening Western

Germany. The Rhine, blocked

gia, February 20 (AFP)

were engaged Monday

oximately 3,000 unemp

ost of them women

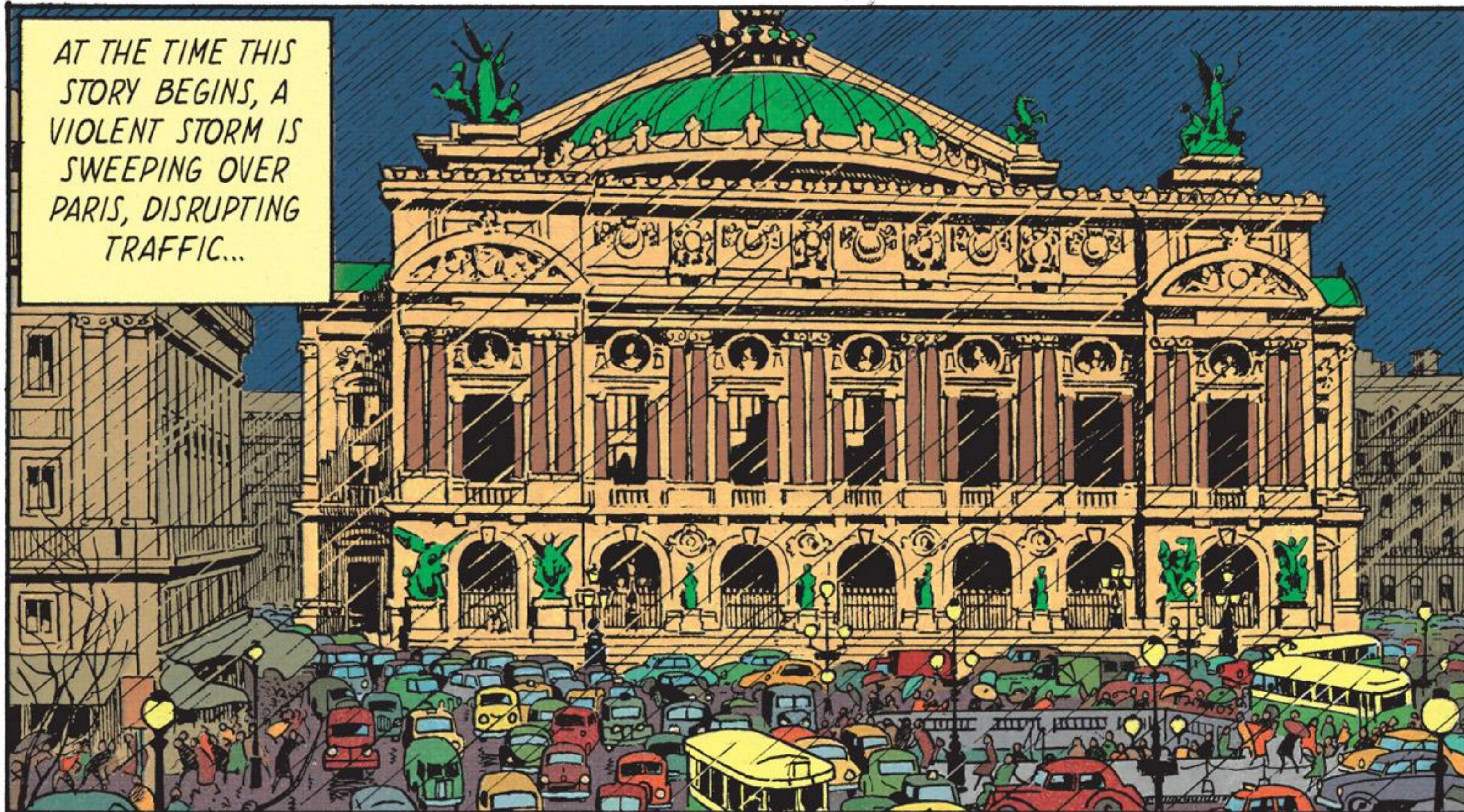
med with knives, steel

d stones, tried to

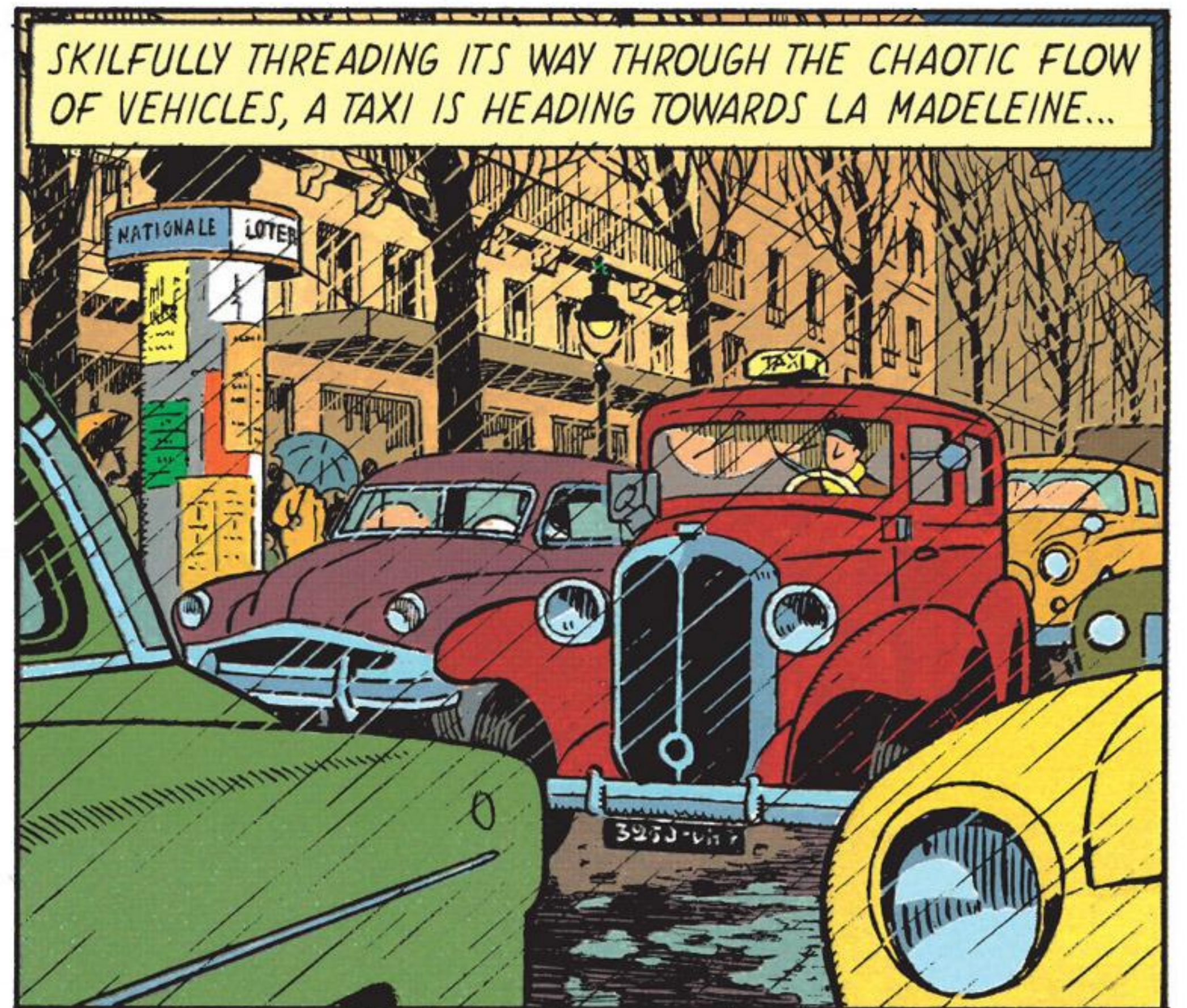
storm the city hall

lia forces o

AT THE TIME THIS
STORY BEGINS, A
VIOLENT STORM IS
SWEEPING OVER
PARIS, DISRUPTING
TRAFFIC...



SKILFULLY THREADING ITS WAY THROUGH THE CHAOTIC FLOW
OF VEHICLES, A TAXI IS HEADING TOWARDS LA MADELEINE...



... AND IN THIS TAXI WE FIND OUR OLD
FRIEND, PROFESSOR PHILIP MORTIMER.

Say, driver, it looks like things aren't
going too well in Paris these days?

For sure, guv! What with this
ruddy weather that just won't stop!



Me, I'm pretty darn sure
that it was their stupid
H bomb that made the
seasons go all funny...
It's like all those artificial
things they're sending up
in the sky! You'll see,
guv, those whatsits will
bring down loads of
trouble! And...



SUDDENLY A
LIGHT TURNS
RED...



... AND YET A LARGE BLUE SEDAN, NEGLECTING
TO STOP, DASHES THROUGH THE JUNCTION.



IMMEDIATELY...

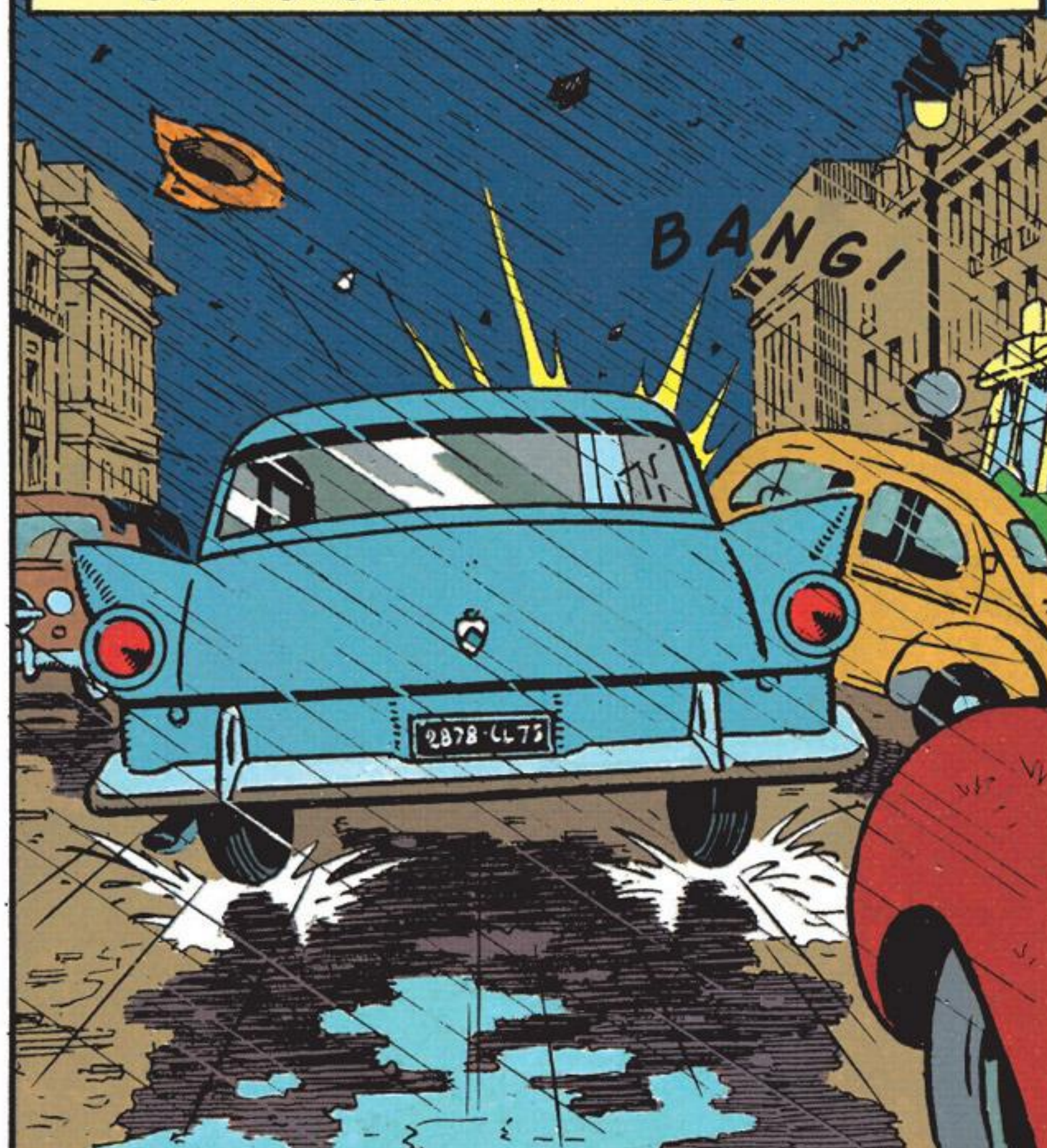
TWEEEEEEEE

What are you doing?...
You ran the red light!!

Sorry! The boss
is waiting for us!



BUT AT THAT MOMENT, A 4CV COMES OUT
OF FAUBOURG SAINT HONORÉ AND...



WHILE THE RENAULT, BOWLED OVER BY
THE VIOLENT IMPACT, CRASHES INTO A BUS,
THE FORD THUNDERS ON, FLEEING
TOWARDS LA CONCORDE!!



TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: MORTIMER, BEING A PROPER, WELL-EDUCATED GENTLEMAN,
SPEAKS FLUENT FRENCH IN HIS INTERACTIONS WITH FRENCH PEOPLE, OF COURSE.

Edgard Félix Pierre Jacobs (1904–1987), better known under his pen name Edgar P. Jacobs, was a comic book creator (writer and artist), born in Brussels, Belgium. It has been said of Jacobs that he didn't remember a time when he hadn't drawn.

Jacobs assisted fellow Belgian Hergé (Georges Prosper Remi) in the recasting of Hergé's *Tintin in the Congo*, *Tintin in America*, *King Ottokar's Sceptre* and *The Blue Lotus* for book publication. He also contributed directly to both the drawing and storylines for the Tintin double-albums *The Secret of the Unicorn/Red Rackham's Treasure* and *The Seven Crystal Balls/Prisoners of the Sun*.

When the comics magazine Tintin was launched on 26th September 1946, it included Jacobs' story *Le secret de l'Espadon* (*The Secret of the Swordfish*). This story would be the first in the Blake and Mortimer series.

The characters of Captain Francis Blake, dashing head of MI5, his friend Professor Philip Mortimer, a nuclear physicist, and their sworn enemy Colonel Olrik became legendary heroes of the 9th art in the long-running series.

After Jacobs' death in 1987, Bob de Moor completed his unfinished last story. In the mid-1990s, the series was continued by the Jacobs Studios with new teams of writers and artists.



ORIGINAL FRENCH EDITION		
1	1950	Le secret de l'Espadon, T1
2	1953	Le secret de l'Espadon, T2
3	1953	Le secret de l'Espadon, T3
4	1954	Le mystère de la Grande Pyramide, T1
5	1955	Le mystère de la Grande Pyramide, T2
6	1956	La marque Jaune
7	1957	L'énigme de l'Atlantide
8	1959	S.O.S. Météores
9	1962	Le piège diabolique
10	1967	L'affaire du collier
11	1971	Les trois formules du professeur Satō, T1
12	1990	Les trois formules du professeur Satō, T2 (Jacobs/De Moor)
13	1996	L'affaire Francis Blake (Van Hamme/Benoit)
14	2000	La machination Voronov (Sente/Juillard)
15	2001	L'étrange rendez-vous (Van Hamme/Benoit)
16	2003	Les sarcophages du Sixième Continent, T1 (Sente/Juillard)
17	2004	Les sarcophages du Sixième Continent, T2 (Sente/Juillard)
18	2008	Le sanctuaire du Gondwana (Sente/Juillard)
19	2009	La malédiction des 30 deniers, T1 (Van Hamme/Sterne/De Spiegeleer)
20	2010	La malédiction des 30 deniers, T2 (Van Hamme/Aubin)
21	2012	Le serment des cinq Lords (Sente/Juillard)

CINEBOOK EDITION		
15	2013	The Secret of the Swordfish, Part 1
16	2013	The Secret of the Swordfish, Part 2
17	2013	The Secret of the Swordfish, Part 3
2	2007	The Mystery of the Great Pyramid, Part 1
3	2008	The Mystery of the Great Pyramid, Part 2
1	2007	The Yellow "M"
12	2012	Atlantis Mystery
6	2009	S.O.S. Meteors
19	2014	The Time Trap
7	2010	The Affair of the Necklace
		Professor Satō's Three Formulas, Part 1
		Professor Satō's Three Formulas, Part 2
4	2008	The Francis Blake Affair
8	2010	The Voronov Plot
5	2009	The Strange Encounter
9	2011	The Sarcophagi of the Sixth Continent, Part 1
10	2011	The Sarcophagi of the Sixth Continent, Part 2
11	2011	The Gondwana Shrine
13	2012	The Curse of the 30 Pieces of Silver, Part 1
14	2012	The Curse of the 30 Pieces of Silver, Part 2
18	2014	The Oath of the Five Lords

PREVIOUSLY:

At the end of last episode, Blake and Mortimer are about to be captured, but...

Original title: Le secret de l'espadon V2

Original edition: © Editions Blake & Mortimer / Studio Jacobs (Dargaud – Lombard s.a.) 1985
by E.P. Jacobs
www.dargaud.com
All rights reserved

English translation: © 2013 Cinebook Ltd

Translator: Jerome Saincantin
Lettering and text layout: Design Amorandi
Printed in Spain by Just Colour Graphic

This edition first published in Great Britain in 2013 by
Cinebook Ltd
56 Beech Avenue
Canterbury, Kent
CT4 7TA
www.cinebook.com

A CIP catalogue record for this book
is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-84918-161-7